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MEMOIR

OF THE

REV. THOMAS S. M'KEAN, M.A.

MISSIONARY AT TAHITI,

WHO WAS KILLED BY A MUSKET-SHOT, DURING AN ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND THE NATIVES, ON THE 30TH OF JUNE, 1844.

BY

THE REV. JOSEPH A. MILLER,
OF NEW-COURT CHAPEL, LINCOLN'S-INN-FIELDS.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION,

BY

THE REV. ARTHUR TIDMAN,
FOREIGN SECRETARY OF THE LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

LONDON:
JOHN SNOW, 35, PATERNOSTER ROW.
1847.

PREFACE.

THE charge of compiling the following Memoir was entrusted to me by the family and friends of Mr. M'Kean. It is to be regretted that their choice had not fallen on one who had the advantage of a longer acquaintance with the departed than I could look back upon. The privilege of forming friendship with him was only afforded me during his brief sojourn in the metropolis previously to his sailing for Tahiti. But he was one of those genuine, transparent, open-hearted beings whom it does

not take long to understand and love. I little thought when, on the morning before his departure, we bowed together before God at my own family altar, and commended each other affectionately to the Father of Mercies, before we said "Farewell," that such a duty would so soon after devolve on me as that which, out of love to his memory and out of regard to the wishes of the bereaved, I have now undertaken. Many a heart bled at the tidings of his removal, for he was much beloved; and affection dictated that some recollections of his life and labours should be embodied in such a form as would be permanent, and might be employed for the purposes of comfort, encouragement, and imitation.

I could have desired that this sketch had been in some of its parts more complete; but its deficiencies will, I am sure, be forgiven when

I add, that while engaged in preparing for publication the Memoir of my departed brother, it pleased God to lay upon me the stroke of domestic bereavement in its most afflictive form. The Narrative is sent forth from the house of mourning—inscribed, though it bears no formal Dedication, to the cherished memory of one in whose society the larger portion of it was compiled, at seasons of happy communion and intercourse, now no longer enjoyed—but still to be renewed in the world of uninterrupted union and immortal felicity.

I feel bound to express my thanks to the Rev. William Howe, now on his way to Tahiti on a special mission, for his ready assistance in affording me information as to the missionary character and labours of Mr. M'Kean; and I believe that every reader will, with me, appreciate the kindness of the able and laborious

Foreign Secretary of the London Missionary Society, in furnishing, amid his many pressing occupations, the interesting and valuable chapter which forms the introduction to the volume.

It only remains to be added, that the entire profit arising out of the sale of the Memoir will be placed in the hands of the Treasurer of the London Missionary Society for the benefit of the widow and children of the deceased.

J. A. M.

West Square,
April, 1847.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE following Memoir of a faithful and laborious servant of God presents some features of *unusual* interest, calculated equally to gratify and to instruct the Christian Reader.

The character exhibited on these pages, though partaking of the infirmities and frailties common to our nature, presents an union of christian graces rarely seen; a combination of ardour and humility, of self-denying zeal and pure benevolence, that must lead the devout mind to glorify that grace which can, from a stock so degenerate, produce "good fruits" so fair and abundant.

The very *brevity* of the Memoir invests it, in some respects, with additional interest; for, into the limited space of less than twenty years, are crowded events the most solemn and momentous in the history of man,—affecting alike the life that is, and the life that is to come;—the

saving conversion of the soul to God,—separation to the work of the ministry,—consecration to the glory of Christ in the salvation of the heathen,—the willing abandonment of all the enjoyments of home,—and a short but honourable course of toil and suffering exchanged for the rest and the reward of heaven.

But it is on the *missionary* portion of the following Memoir that the Writer of these lines, at the request of his friend the Author, ventures to inscribe a few introductory remarks; principally with a view of bearing both his personal and official testimony to the integrity and devotedness of a good soldier of Jesus Christ, who has fallen honourably on the high places of the field.

The Reverend Thomas Smith M'Kean was accepted as an Agent of the London Missionary Society about the time that the Writer became officially connected with that Institution; and it devolved on him to conduct the short correspondence which was so painfully brought to its close. He possessed, therefore, facilities for well understanding his character and justly estimating his principles; and the manly piety, the love of truth, the entire consecration to

the service of his great Master, which distinguished the character of his departed Brother, inspire the highest love and veneration for his memory; while they afford grounds of solace and support under the painful associations of his premature removal.

Although the feelings of every Candidate for missionary labour should be regarded with kindness and delicacy, yet it is undeniable that many youthful Aspirants for this sacred vocation are ill-qualified to judge either of the qualifications it demands, or of the labours and sacrifices which it must involve. Their feelings, though sincere and powerful, partake more of the excitement of the platform than of the calm and prayerful reflections of the closet; and their views of missionary life have been formed, not from the stern reality it proves, but rather from the pictures of success found in some popular volume, which, though true to the life, are still only part of the truth, and therefore calculated to produce defective and mistaken impressions.

Minds thus strongly stimulated, and but partially instructed, would go forth to the service, anticipating "fairy land" where they would find only the sterile wilderness; and would be ill

prepared to meet the demands for labour and courage, faith and patience, that are pre-requisites for success.

Whatever therefore may be the benefits to be anticipated from *youthful ardour*, the disadvantages of *inexperience*, and of a character *untried*, are palpable; and the Directors of a Missionary Institution, sensible of these drawbacks to entire confidence and satisfaction, will receive with peculiar thankfulness and joy the overtures of service from reflective and intelligent men, who, having exercised their ministry, and proved their competency for a few years at home, are constrained, by the love of Christ and pity to the heathen, to depart far hence unto the Gentiles.

Such tried and approved men were Paul and Barnabas, when they were set apart by the Church, at the command of the Holy Spirit, for the arduous ministry to which He had called them; and it will be an auspicious omen for the missionary cause, when many of the Pastors and Teachers of our churches, with matured judgment and established reputation, shall devote their influence and acquirements to this great service.

With such convictions, the overture of the Rev. T. S. M'Kean, to devote himself to foreign

service, was accepted by the Directors of the London Missionary Society most cordially. He had long pondered the subject in his heart—he had made it the occasion of continued prayer—he had laboured judiciously and successfully for a people by whom he was respected and beloved, —but he was willing to forsake all, and follow Christ even to the ends of the earth, when he believed the voice of Divine Providence commanded him thither; and, with these high qualifications for the office of a Missionary, he went forth to his work, enjoying the high admiration, and strong confidence, of the Directors and of every enlightened friend of Missions who had knowledge of his character.

The appointment of Mr. M'Kean to the *Island of Tahiti* was made by the Directors under the influence of special circumstances, which they regarded as plain and decisive indications of the divine will. Peculiar and important service was required, and he appeared to them "*the man for the work;*" and, although his views and predilections had been toward the East, he cheerfully acquiesced in his destination to Polynesia.

On his arrival in the Island, he applied himself, with the most indefatigable diligence, to *the*

acquisition of the Native Language. He wisely judged that this should be the "one thing" to which the time and toil of the *new* Missionary ought to be devoted, inasmuch as nothing can be well done till this difficult attainment has been made his own. In this first application and concentration of his powers, he presents an example which it is earnestly to be desired all labourers in the missionary field would faithfully follow. At the *commencement* of missionary life, there are many *new objects* to engage the attention, and many *new claims* to divide strength; but, if all are not kept in the strictest subordination to the correct acquisition and facile use of the Native Language, it will not only hinder the efficiency of future labours, but mar the comfort of future years. If this difficulty be not mastered within the first two or three years, it is seldom overcome at all; and, without an accurate knowledge, and a fluent utterance, of the vernacular tongue, how greatly must both the pleasure and usefulness of the Missionary be abridged!

Mr. M'Kean's conscientious and persevering study of the Tahitian Language was rewarded by his *early success;* and, considering the period of

his life, (thirty-five years of age) when he entered upon this task, his rapid progress affords a striking proof that labour, sanctified by prayer, will counterbalance many disadvantages, and soon surmount the most formidable difficulties.

The Reader will find from the following Memoir that the first impressions of Mr. M'Kean, in relation to *the character of the Islanders*, were those of *painful disappointment*. Their christian attainments fell much below the standard of his expectations; while the remaining influence of their pagan habits filled him with surprise and regret. The judicious and forcible observations of the Author on this subject are entitled to candid and serious attention, as they sufficiently account for these painful feelings of the Missionary, without invalidating the sincerity of the Native Christians. Mr. M'Kean, under the influence of the best motives, appears to have formed expectations of native piety unreasonably exalted; while the depression, arising from his disappointment, disqualified him from justly appreciating christian principle, though associated with many imperfections.

It can scarcely excite surprise, nor does it deserve unqualified censure, that the faithful

men, who, for nearly twenty years, had wept over the horrors and abominations of Paganism in Tahiti,—when they suddenly beheld the overthrow of this cruel and debasing system, should describe the happy change in glowing terms, and paint it in strong colours; but this may have led *the stranger*, who knew not the aggravated and appalling evils that had passed away, to ascribe to that change a power and extent which the Missionaries themselves never intended to convey. For great and general as the transformation effected by Christianity really was, yet at no period was it to be credited that more than a minority of the Natives were personally the subjects of its saving and sanctifying power.

Nor ought it to awaken astonishment, though it may demand regret, that the feelings and habits even of the sincere Christians in Tahiti required the exercise of forbearance and charity. It would indeed appear morally impossible, that minds, so awfully enfeebled and debased by every principle of evil, and so utterly alien to every sentiment and feeling of virtue and goodness, should lose the traces of their original deformity in the first or even the second generation. Who

can read, in the inspired Epistles, the solemn prohibitions and earnest warnings addressed to the primitive Christians, against such gross vices as dishonesty, lying, intemperance, and impurity, without being reminded of their early association with these characteristic vices of idolatry? and who could expect that the Christians of Tahiti, formerly enslaved by habits more brutish and more loathsome, and subsequently possessing advantages far more limited, than the Converts of the Apostolic Age, would at once escape the influence of their former bondage, and rise to the full altitude of christian excellence?

It was Mr. M'Kean's misfortune also to be located at a Station where he had some of the *most imperfect specimens* of native character to be found in the Island, and yet it is evident that his early unfavourable impressions of the Christians at Point Venus were corrected by prolonged knowledge and enlarged experience; for, though he dissolved the Church for a season, he subsequently received to the communion of saints many of those who had been the subjects of this extreme discipline, although they had given no *new* or peculiar evidence of their conversion to the Saviour. The whole proceeding was alike

honourable to the fidelity and candour of the Missionary; but it strongly evinces that Tahitian Piety, when most severely tested, would still bear the trial and be found sincere.

Mr. M'Kean's brief career as a Christian Missionary in Tahiti is intimately connected with those events which have given a painful celebrity to the later history of that interesting Island. Three years before his arrival, the Naval Power of France had been successfully employed to compel the Native Government to admit the Teachers of Popery. In the year 1839, under a threat of invasion and bombardment from Commodore La Place, of the "Artemise," the Law, which prohibited the propagation of Romanism, was repealed; and, from that period, the Catholic Priests not only possessed unrestricted liberty for the propagation of their opinions, but they extorted the power of purchasing and holding land—a privilege never enjoyed by the Protestant Missionaries, who, rather than violate the strong prejudices of the Natives against the alienation of any portion of the soil, were content to hold their dwellings on the pleasure of the Chiefs.

Although the *impolicy* of the Native Government and its advisers, in attempting to exclude

Popery by legal force, may be readily admitted, the conduct of France, in denying to the Islanders that right which she assumes and jealously exercises,—the right of admitting or excluding Foreigners from her territory,—was but the triumph of injustice—the usurped authority of the powerful—over the feeble and defenceless.

Such, however, was the freedom and security enjoyed by the French Missionaries, several of whom were settled on Tahiti before the arrival of Mr. M'Kean; and to counteract their dangerous designs, by *scriptural argument and moral influence,* was the chief design of the Directors in strengthening the Mission by the appointment of our Brother and his Associates to that field of labour.

In *thus* opposing the influence of Popery, the Protestant Missionaries had no occasion for apprehension or regret. The Bible was already in the hands of the people: to its sacred records they had been taught to look as the only ground of faith, and the sole rule of duty; and, although the plausible sophistries and alluring superstitions of Popery were tried, to seduce them from their simplicity and stedfastness, they were tried *in vain.*

In the month of September, 1842, six months from the settlement of Mr. M'Kean in Tahiti, the Island was seized by Captain Du Petit Thouars; and "partly by fraud, and partly by intimidation," the authority of France, under the name of a Protectorate, was established; while the laws and the rights of Pomare and her Chiefs were virtually abolished. Whether this unjust and violent proceeding was stimulated by zeal for Popery or hatred of England, it may be difficult to determine; but the tacit acquiescence of the British Government in this cruel aggression on the liberties of a Sovereign and her people, who had been encouraged to confide in our friendship and to anticipate our help in time of need, admits of no second opinion, and must excite mingled feelings of regret and reprehension.

And now the real difficulties of the Protestant Missionaries *began;* and henceforth they became formidable, and multiplied daily. The great majority of the people easily discovered that their Queen had been betrayed, and their Country sold, by a small number of unprincipled Chiefs, and that a base slavery, or a patriotic resistance, was their only choice; while the few, who submitted

to the yoke, soon became victims to the loathsome vices introduced by their oppressors.

The alternative presented to the British Missionaries, when they attempted to give counsel to the injured people, was sufficiently perplexing. They were the messengers of peace; but, if they advised submission to the French Domination, the debasing influence of licentiousness was the prospective result. They were the teachers of truth and justice; and, if they hinted at subjection, the patriotic Islanders would shrewdly retort, "Would Englishmen submit if France seized their country?" Still, however, impelled by the benign principles of Christianity, as well as the conviction that resistance to the overwhelming resources of France must in the end prove unavailing, they endeavoured to restrain the people from taking arms, and used their best influence to detain them in their peaceful villages, around the sanctuaries in which they had for years peacefully worshipped their Saviour and their God.

But these pacific and benevolent endeavours proved for the greater part unsuccessful. This, it will be seen, was the case with Mr. M'Kean and the Natives of his Station. They respected the character of their Missionary, and loved him

for his works' sake; but their Patriotism on the one hand, and their abhorrence of French Oppression on the other, were irresistible; and, notwithstanding his remonstrance and entreaty, they left their homes and joined their countrymen in arms amidst the fastnesses of their mountains.

It was in prosecuting the generous intention of giving these deeply-injured people the blessings of one more peaceful Sabbath that the life of the devoted Missionary was sacrificed. It was the last Sabbath he expected to spend upon the Island; and, not apprehending any general attack of the French Forces, he had invited some of his old friends and church-members to assemble, and hear the word of God from his lips. He was affectionately concerned for his scattered flock, and solicitous before his departure once more to administer to them the truths of that Gospel which would enable them to improve, as well as endure, their present afflictions; or prepare them for the solemn issue of the battle-field which soon awaited many.

But this last desire was denied him. The dawn of the Sabbath beheld the French Troops advancing from Papeete toward Point Venus;

while the Natives hastily retreated to a position more advantageous, or lay around in ambush, waiting for their enemies. The Tahitians, who remained concealed amidst thick bushes and closely-interwoven underwood, commenced firing on the French Troops as they were passing the Missionary's house. A fatal shot, aimed at an enemy, struck their best Friend; and he fell,—probably by the hand of one who would have laid down his life for his sake. His death was instantaneous; and, at the moment he expected to have been serving God in his sanctuary, he was called to the fellowship of heaven.

A dispensation so deeply inscrutable—so awfully sudden—though directed by infallible wisdom and full of mercy to the departed, could not fail to affect the living with the most poignant sorrow. The Native Christians mourned for their fallen Teacher as for a father; his brethren of the Mission followed him to the grave and made great lamentation over him; but, above all, his beloved wife, who had sought a refuge from the horrors of war in a neighbouring Island, in the moment when expecting to receive her husband, learnt the sad truth that she was a widow, with two fatherless infants, in a strange land. But,

under this agonising stroke, the Saviour in whom she trusted sustained and soothed her deeply-wounded spirit; and the God of the departed Missionary will, we doubt not, hear a mother's prayer, and prove himself the Father of her fatherless little ones, the Guide of their youth, and the Strength and Portion of their future years.

ARTHUR TIDMAN.

Mission House,
Blomfield Street,
April 24, 1847.

MEMOIR

OF

THOMAS S. M'KEAN.

CHAPTER I.

FAMILY HISTORY—CHILDHOOD—RELIGIOUS IMPRESSIONS—SECULAR EMPLOYMENT.

THE subject of this memoir was born at Garlieston, Wigtonshire, on the 17th of February, 1807. In some memoranda of his family history which he has left behind him, but which were made without the slightest intention of their ever meeting the public eye, the following passage occurs :—

"My grand-parents, both paternal and maternal, were natives of that district of Argyleshire called Kintyre. My paternal grandfather was a younger son of the head of a clan of some note in former times, namely the M'Ians of Andramurchan. The clan and the name are now both identified with that of the M'Donalds of Glencoe; a name which has obtained a painful celebrity in the annals of Scotland,

from the cold-blooded massacre to which the infatuated clan was subjected in the reign of William III. Regarding my maternal ancestors, I have never been able to ascertain much further than that their name, M'Millan, is still prevalent in Kintyre. These grand-parents, during the rebellion of 1745, were obliged, like many others, to seek refuge in another country than their own. Ireland, being contiguous to Kintyre, presented readily the refuge they desired. My paternal grandfather, from his circumstances in life, having received a liberal education, soon obtained an easy and respectable living as town-clerk of some town, the name of which I have forgotten, in the south of Ireland. My maternal grandfather cultivated a plot of ground in the same district. Here my grandfathers married, here my father and mother were born, and here also they were married.

"The rebellion in Ireland, in 1798, caused my progenitors again to seek an asylum; this they found in their fatherland. My paternal grandfather, with his wife, my father and mother, and some other sons and daughters, returned to Scotland, and settled in Galloway. Their home in Ireland being in the very seat of hostilities, they left that country almost pennyless, and, more mournful than that still, there was not one of them a possessor of the 'true riches.' My grandfather was the first of the band made

acquainted with the Saviour. He was honoured in his old age as the instrument of leading my grandmother, as well as his son and daughter-in-law (my father and mother,) to the same Saviour. This is a circumstance which to my mind associates more true and permanent honour with his name than all the vain and fading honours of his ancestors; for 'they that are wise' in winning souls to God 'shall shine as stars' in the Redeemer's kingdom 'for ever and ever.' He died, rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, at a good old age, having nearly attained to ninety years. My father and mother became members of a congregational church, and remained in the fellowship until they were called, I trust, from the fellowship of the saints below to that of the church on high; and though in comparatively poor circumstances, they brought up respectably a family of seven children, of whom I myself am the youngest."

There is an intimate connection between the commencement and the close of a man's earthly history. We naturally associate the one with the other; while contemplating the end of the course, we find ourselves instinctively reverting to the circumstances amid which it began. And should there be from any specific cause a peculiarity of interest thrown around the hour of departure, that interest is at once reflected upon the moment of

entrance into life, so as to invest it with a character of impressiveness and additional importance. But the same rule applies still more strongly to the religious and spiritual history of men. As when, the goal being reached, our eye rests not alone on the successful racer, but sends back its gaze at once, and by a natural impulse, along the course as far as the starting-point; or as when, the height of scientific attainment having been climbed, we inquire, with an eagerness involuntary and not easily brooking disappointment, into the first steps of the onward progress, and the impressions which first induced the man to set out in the now successful career,—so when the Christian has 'finished his course with joy,' and the spirit that was 'wise unto salvation' has reached that point where 'knowledge in part' is done away, can we forbear to turn an interested eye to the point at which the course began, or to inquire the mode in which the mind was first excited to prefer spiritual attainment to every other good? This interest admits of increase, too, from circumstances. The more striking the accompanying incidents of a believer's end, the deeper we feel the claims of his earlier history to be on our attention and investigation.

In the case before us, we have one more testimony given to the very many which are already on record to the value and blessedness of that exercise—the

observance of which is not less a privilege than it is a duty—family prayer. It was while kneeling at that altar, on which, morning and evening, the sacrifice of prayer and praise was wont to be laid, that Thomas M'Kean's heart was first melted into tenderness and susceptibility to divine truth. His father was pleading for all his children, and for him in particular, the youngest, that he might be brought to the Saviour early. The burden of the supplication affected the child, and, tenderly attached as he was to his parent, he wept and sobbed aloud as he heard him pray that he might be permitted the joy of seeing his youngest child devoted to God, and walking in the ways of the Lord, ere he himself was removed from the world. The very mention of his father's removal, combined with the circumstances under which it was made, overwhelmed him. Referring to this occasion, he says, "When prayer was over, my father spoke to me, and inquired the cause of my sorrow. I told him. He comforted me, and spoke of Jesus, his character, his work, his love, and his glory. He told me that he was the friend of sinners, and, though father and mother were both taken away, Jesus would still be my friend. I shall never, I trust, forget the impressions of that night." In days in which there is reason to fear that, in many households professing godliness, the duties of the

family altar are either entirely overlooked or regarded in a very secondary point of view, one such incident as this deserves to be marked out for especial notice. The hearts of not a few who are concerned for the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom are often heavy, and their apprehensions for the future are often painful, when they look upon the present condition of a large portion of the children even of those who make a Christian profession. Is there among these the promise which there ought to be? or rather does not many an instance present itself in which piety appears as though it were dying out of the family? The pastor discovers little encouragement to believe that, when the elders of the house are removed, the children will retain their places in the sanctuary. The world is preferred by them to the Saviour, and in their habits they are fast putting away even the form of godliness. But can there be surprise, whatever may be the grief at such a spectacle, when there is ground to fear either that family religion is habitually overlooked, or, if it be the rule of the house, that the exceptions are so many, and so dishonourable to God, that all respect for the rule itself is taken away? When a chapter of the Bible is coldly read, and a prayer as coldly offered, in which no advantage is taken of the opportunity of pleading with God for the individual members of the family,

according to their varying circumstances,—when the non-attendance of any who may make excuses is connived at, — when slight causes are often allowed to interfere with the exercise, and it is deemed a sufficient reason for its omission that business presses in the morning, or that worldly friends are present in the evening,—can we wonder that children are not impressed with a sense of the value of religion, that they remain unconverted and undecided, and ultimately join themselves to the world, and adopt just that measure of religion which the world requires as necessary to respectability? Well would it be for many a family to take a lesson from Christians, in humbler circumstances perhaps, but more consistent in their course—from those who, though they have few pleasures of a mere earthly kind, and have pressing demands on all their time for exertion to gain but a scanty pittance for their daily bread, yet can and do find time to call their families around them for fervent prayer, for pious instruction; and who would as soon, nay even sooner, begin and close their day without their morning or their evening meal as fail in their families to meet the opening day with united prayer, or allow the sun to go down without this recognition of their heavenly Father. Here, if anywhere, the pious parent realizes his responsibility, acquires and preserves his religious influence; here the child is

constrained to feel more than that his parent loves him—that he loves *his soul*,—and the conviction that his soul is an object of intense interest to those whom he loves is undoubtedly the first and most promising step to a personal sense of its value.

At the time at which this incident occurred, our departed friend was about ten or twelve years of age. Besides being instructed in the elements of the gospel by his father, he had the opportunity of acquiring further knowledge of divine things at the Sabbath-school, under the superintendence of his pastor, the Rev. Thomas Smith. His teacher, Mr. Smith's son, now of Sydney, was spared to see the fruits of his labour in the subsequent piety of his pupil and in his consecration to the work of the ministry; and when that work was early terminated, and under circumstances more than ordinarily distressing, Mr. Smith made public reference to the earlier history of the departed in an address, from which we make a brief extract.

"Mr. M'Kean attended the Sabbath-school in early life, and, like Timothy, 'from a child knew the holy Scriptures, which are able to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.' During his attendance at the Sabbath-school, he committed to memory large portions of the word of God, and on several occasions, at the examination of the school, he stood up before the

congregation and repeated one or two chapters correctly, and with ease and fluency. He stated, on his admission to the church, that he was greatly indebted to Sabbath-school instruction, which, through the grace of God, enabled him to withstand the attacks of the infidel, as well as to resist at last all the allurements and temptations to which he had been exposed. There his mind was richly stored with divine truth, the full benefit of which did not appear until afterwards, when he felt the full power of the gospel. There those principles were implanted and strengthened which tended to preserve him from the seducing powers of vice. There those moral feelings were first touched which, in due time, arrived at that degree of sensitiveness which rendered him incapable of bearing what was evil, and gave him the power of relishing, in the most exquisite manner, all that was lovely, and pure, and excellent."

While still very young, he manifested a great desire for learning of a secular kind, and of this he gave a most decisive proof. His parents being unable to bear the expense of sending him to school, so determined was he in the effort to acquire knowledge, that he engaged himself to a rope-spinner, to turn his wheel, persevering until he had earned sufficient to pay a quarter's fee, and then went to school. He managed, thus,

always to pay his teacher in advance, until, at length, his instructor being made aware of his situation, and perceiving his intense anxiety to learn, undertook to instruct him gratuitously the last three months during which he remained at school. He was equally diligent at home as at school, and during his hours of leisure was seldom to be found from his father's side, with his book and slate in his hand.

When he was about sixteen, it pleased God to lay on a dying-bed that father to whom he was so fondly attached; and never was the sincerity of filial affection manifested in a more affecting form than in the unwearied tenderness with which he ministered by the sufferer's couch until nature sunk and his parent fell asleep in Jesus, at the age of fifty-six. Upon him and his sister now devolved the duty of providing for their mother's comfort. He remained at home for some time, during which he regularly maintained that exercise from which he had already derived so much benefit, and to which, in after-life, he often recurred with gratitude and praise to God. He never forgot his father's family altar. He subsequently came to England, with a view to improve his circumstances, and was engaged for some time in mercantile pursuits. Here he suffered much from the absence of the religious influence by which he

was surrounded at home. Little acquainted as he was, experimentally, with the weakness and depravity of his own heart, and of his need of entire dependence on divine assistance, gay and dissipating scenes, to which he had been an entire stranger, proved a temptation too strong for him, and former impressions were at one time nearly being effaced. But the eye of a heavenly Father was upon his wandering child. Conscience was not allowed to sleep. "My mind," says he, referring to that season, "was in perfect torment: I found that I must either give up all thoughts of religion, which I was not permitted to do, or give up the course of life in which I was beginning to walk. The Lord, in his love, brought me to the latter decision. I returned home, and, after again enjoying the regular hearing of the gospel and intercourse with God's people, I trust I found joy and peace in believing."

In a pecuniary point of view, his visit to England had proved of no advantage to him: he returned home as poor as when he left it; but, to use the words of a near relative, in referring to this period of his history, "With us he found a welcome reception, for oh! we loved him dearly." His next effort was to turn to account the knowledge which he had at first acquired with so much zeal and amid so many disadvantages, and of which

he had felt the value too much not to have retained and increased it. He undertook the charge of a day-school in Newton-Stewart, and here he continued for three years, stedfastly pursuing the calling to which he had devoted himself; but, as will presently be seen, anxiously directing his hopes towards labours of a still more arduous and honourable order. A testimonial, given him upon his leaving Newton-Stewart, affords an interesting and satisfactory summary of the years which he had spent there: "In reference to his professional character, the general sentiment is, that he has been an industrious and successful instructor in the elementary branches of education, and attentive to the moral and religious training of his pupils. Besides his weekly and appointed hours of teaching, he has likewise taken a leading part in the instructions of our Sabbath-school, and by the members of that institution has been regarded as one of their most influential and useful assistants. While here, he professed his adherence to the principles of the Independent Church; but there being no fixed congregation here belonging to that religious denomination, he attended divine service in connection with the Relief. He was steady in his worship, and attentive to the ordinances of religion. Latterly, I have been on terms of intimacy with him, and I feel great pleasure

in testifying to the strict propriety of his conduct, and that I think him a young man of excellent moral and religious character."—*James Reston*, Minister, Newton-Stewart, October 1834.

The circumstances under which he resigned this engagement must next be detailed.

CHAPTER II.

DESIRE TO BECOME A PREACHER OF THE GOSPEL—DISAPPOINTMENTS—ULTIMATE SUCCESS.

It may be safely asserted, that where the Lord by his Spirit imparts the principles of true and saving grace to the heart, he does in that very act deposit in the bosom the essentials for a life of usefulness and Christian service. In the soul thus visited by his grace, there will be the love of Christ constraining, not to live to self, but to him—a strong and fervent solicitude for the glory of Christ in the success of the gospel—and a desire to imitate Jesus in every respect in which he requires his disciples to follow him, and of course in this,—the "preaching liberty to the captive," and bearing from a justly-offended God the tidings of pardon and reconciliation to guilty and wretched men. These implanted principles constitute, undoubtedly, the chief essentials of the Christian ministry itself; and though they are not all that is necessary to its successful prosecution, yet, so far as they are

possessed, there is a preparedness of heart for that high work. Public usefulness in the service of the sanctuary demands, however, a peculiar order of gifts adapted to that end; and even where the requisite gifts and graces are possessed, circumstances may for a time render the undertaking of so solemn a charge inexpedient. The desire for the engagements of a Christian minister is most natural in the case of the young and devoted Christian; but whether or not it be that form of service to which the God of providence and of grace summons him, is a question which cannot be too earnestly and prayerfully weighed, and in the answer to which gifts must be considered as well as graces, and providential circumstances as well as deeply-wrought and ardent desire.

There is still this comfort to the Christian who proposes the question, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" with a secret longing to be employed as a pastor and teacher, that there are many other forms of service besides that of the stated ministry in which those divinely-imparted principles, of the existence of which he is conscious, and which have issued in a longing so to be employed, may be called out into honourable exercise. The pious youth, who finds himself denied the gifts which qualify for preaching the word, may clearly perceive that the ministry which he has received of the Lord

is Sabbath-school employment. Another may find himself set apart to the visitation of the poor and ignorant, his gifts fitting him for this, and his circumstances plainly shutting him up to it. Another may discover that his service for Christ is, as well by the absence of opportunity as by the withholding of powers which would be required for a wider range, limited to the souls of his own immediate associates and kindred. But a fourth, pursuing the same question, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" may experience that, whenever he opens his lips to speak of Jesus, his thoughts flow freely in appropriate language, and that he has the gift of utterance,—he may watch, and discern some reason to believe that an impression upon others is the result of his efforts; and these circumstances may reasonably be taken as at least suggesting the hope that the form in which the Redeemer is willing to be served by him is in the more public and exclusive discharge of spiritual duties. All, alike, have a service to perform; all are, by the very possession of personal religion, possessed of that which should inspire them to service: the character of that service must be determined by the prayerful testing of their gifts and circumstances. And the difference between the Christian minister and others is not necessarily that he has stronger desires to labour for Christ than they possess,

but that God, in the bestowment of his gifts, and in the course of his providence, has opened up for him a path which he has not assigned to them.

What then is *my* ministry? where is *my* mission? was the question which had long been working in the bosom of Thomas M'Kean. How can I best show my love to Jesus? in what way most clearly prove my anxiety for his glory, and imitate the example—the illustrious example of his devotedness? He pressed the question prayerfully, and resolved to follow, as circumstances should point out, the course which he deemed might safely be taken as the answer to the prayer, "Shew me thy way, O Lord, teach me thy paths." He found a mission provided for him in his daily occupation. The souls of the children committed to his charge for secular instruction afforded scope for the exercise of those holy desires to serve his Master which, because he was a Christian indeed, dwelt within his breast. He strove to set before them Him who is "the way, the truth, and the life." But his desires were not satisfied with this. It was, indeed, his ministry; but did his Master call him to nothing more? The Sabbath-school afforded him still further scope; and here, year after year, he laboured alternately as teacher and superintendent. Yet the inward principles of love and devotedness still seemed to demand some wider field for their

activity. He could not yet satisfy himself that he was doing all that he might in the service of Jesus. He thought deeply of the state of the heathen abroad—he felt for souls which were perishing at home. His desires would have led him to consecrate his whole life to the work of statedly preaching the gospel: the thought was entertained tremblingly; still he could not dismiss it. He availed himself of the advice of others as to the question whether or not he possessed those gifts which, by culture, might fit him for the work. He found encouragement from these, and at length he addressed a letter to the Rev. G. D. Cullen of Leith, in which he says, "Having a considerable time past had a desire to enter into the public service of our Saviour as a minister of his gospel, and having, as I trust, made both the desire and end in view matters of serious and prayerful self-examination, I have come to the resolution of addressing you, as Secretary of the Theological Academy (Glasgow), to ascertain whether there is any probability of students, who would be dependent on the funds of the Academy, being admitted the ensuing season." This letter was dated July 1st, 1833.

The Committee of the Theological Academy, with a view to ascertain the qualifications of candidates for admission to the institution, propose

to them a certain number of appropriate questions, to which they are invited to return, after mature consideration, full and explicit answers. Through the kindness of Mr. Cullen, the esteemed Secretary, the replies of Mr. M'Kean have been placed in the hands of the biographer; and a few extracts may serve at once to indicate the character of his personal religion, and explain the motives which induced him to desire to preach the gospel. "However weak," he writes, "my love to God may be, I hope I can appeal to him, and say, 'Lord, thou knowest all things—thou knowest that I love thee.' Having, I trust, tasted that the Lord is good, I am desirous that my fellow-sinners may be partakers of the same goodness, and that they may be led to know God, and experience the riches of divine love and mercy in Christ Jesus. As I trust God has given me a desire to act for his glory, and as I believe that he is glorified in the salvation of sinners, I would rejoice, if he should call me to the work, to engage in it. I am aware that it is an arduous and a difficult work; but God, in whom is all our strength, has promised that whosoever putteth his trust in him shall never be confounded."

He further stated, in reply to the inquiries of the Committee, "I believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the word of God,

and consequently the only infallible rule of faith and practice. These hold forth one God, the Maker and Upholder of all things, as the object of religious worship:—that this God is from everlasting; and that in one Jehovah there are Three distinct Persons, and yet those Three are one. This is a mystery which we cannot explain, yet must believe, because it is declared in the word of God. I believe that man was created in a holy and happy state, but by disobedience fell from that state, and brought himself and all his posterity into sin and woe—that when there was no arm to help him, God in infinite mercy undertook his deliverance. He promised that of the seed of the woman should come forth a Saviour—this prediction supported the faith of God's people in the early ages of the world. The patriarchs were assured that in the promised seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. I believe that the types and shadows under the Mosaic economy pointed to and received their accomplishment in the Cross of Christ—that in the fulness of time the Second Person in the Trinity took into union with the divine the human nature without its sin, and came into the world to make himself a sacrifice for sin—that he, by his obedience unto death, satisfied the justice of God, and effected a complete atonement for sin; and by his resurrection opened

up a glorious immortality for all who are interested in the work of redemption—that 'when he had thus by himself purged sin, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High,' where he reigns as King and Lord of all, where, too, he officiates as 'a merciful and faithful High Priest over the house of God,' 'able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them'—that in consequence of his death, the Holy Spirit is given to impart heavenly knowledge, evangelical repentance, living faith, holy love, and spiritual joy—that the gospel is a revelation of the sovereign, free grace and love of God towards a guilty, perishing world, in giving his Son to die for the offences of men, and in 'raising him again for their justification'—that whosoever believeth on him shall be saved, and whosoever believeth not shall be condemned—that there is salvation in no other name but in that of Jesus Christ—that Jesus at his second appearance shall come to judge the quick and the dead—that there is a future state of blessedness and misery, the former for those whose names are written in the Book of Life, the latter for those who are not interested in the great salvation.

From his answer to one of the questions which the Committee proposed,—"Is your mind fully directed to the work of the ministry at home, or

have you any views towards missionary labours abroad?"—it is easy to perceive that he had not overlooked the claims of the heathen, and that his mind was not prepared to prefer the work of the Lord at home to an engagement in the foreign field, if the Head of the Church should so dispose of him. "I can give no definite answer," he wrote; "I wish to be resigned to the will of Providence in that matter."

His application was seconded by the kind testimony borne to his character and qualifications by the pastor of the Congregational Church with which he was connected, the Rev. John Wiseman, of Garlieston: "His piety is deep-toned and decided, and he has always maintained a blameless character. His talents are good, and he has a love for reading and study. Should he succeed in his views, I hope that the Committee of the Academy will not be disappointed in him."

But in this, the fond wish of his heart, he was destined for a time to be disappointed. This was no real disadvantage; it afforded him the opportunity of more closely testing the sincerity and genuineness of his desires and motives. In the case of any who set their hearts on the ministry of the gospel, such discipline is always valuable. It not unfrequently occurs that some of the impressions of the sacred office which are formed in

the minds of young Christians are founded on too partial an estimate of its real nature, and this, too, where it would be unjust to entertain any suspicion of the correctness of the leading motives which induce them to aspire to it. While they look at it as an engagement which would gratify their love to the Saviour and their solicitude for his glory, it is to be apprehended that they take erroneous views of its attendant circumstances. These they are apt to regard as almost exclusively attractive and delightful. They look at one side of the picture only, and that the bright side. Their ideas are mainly derived from what meets their eye in public and in ordinary social intercourse. They perceive that in many instances the office confers station and influence, and these, while they may be improved for God, have also an attractiveness in themselves. They are ready, too, to suppose it impossible but that days and years spent in winning souls to Christ should be replete with little else than happiness and comfort. They fondly imagine that constancy of engagedness in the service of God must be accompanied by continual enjoyment of the light of his countenance, and that a life professedly religious in occupation must needs be a life of almost unmixed spiritual satisfaction. They hesitate not, indeed, to confess their belief that the office is arduous and difficult;

but the thousand circumstances which combine to make up this difficulty, if conceived of with any degree of accuracy, are points on which their minds are naturally unwilling to dwell. They see not the pastor in secret—they follow not where he goes to weep—they listen not where he kneels to tell his God his grief. There is a charm about the very words "winning souls to Christ," but ah! how much has sometimes to be endured by the man who attempts the work. Should he succeed, after what deep anxieties—what trembling between hope and fear—what temporary disappointments—does he arrive at the desire of his heart. And there are souls which will not yield; and in regard to these there is the overwhelming prospect that the word which he preaches for their salvation will become to them "a savour of death unto death." Verily, there is no work so honourable, but there is none which more certainly brings sorrows even with its successes. There is no engagement which affords richer enjoyment, but there is none which more decidedly wears the spirits, depresses the heart—none which more loudly calls for the sympathy and prayers of the Church, and needs the constant, the momentary upholding of divine grace. "Who is sufficient for these things?" How few there are who enter upon it who do not discover that its realities are of a sterner cast than had been anti-

cipated, and who are not taught by experience that the views which they had formed of its attendant circumstances were partial and defective. Still, where the *leading* motives in desiring to be thus employed have been such as God requires, and therefore such as in retrospect conscience approves, though the mind is thus undeceived, the heart will not be discouraged. On the other hand, where the leading motives have been wrong—where they have been derived from considerations at all lower than a supreme desire to glorify God, and a love to souls for the Saviour's sake—where, in fact, they have proceeded from an erroneous conception of the attractiveness of circumstantials connected with the ministry, the disappointment must be, will be grievous. This may not be confessed. The work may be persevered in, but it will be carried on in a manner as burdensome to the individual so engaged as it is profitless to souls and dishonourable to God.

Hence the value of those dispensations which afford the opportunity of bringing to the test desires directed towards the sacred office, and which call upon the spirit to wait with patience and to examine itself with fidelity. Mr. M'Kean received the following reply to his request, from the Committee of the Theological Academy.

"*Leith, September* 17*th*, 1833.

"DEAR SIR,—I have now to inform you that the Committee of the Glasgow Academy met in Edinburgh on Thursday, and considered your application for admission. Your answers and statements were read, and a letter from Mr. Wiseman recommending the case. The Committee were much pleased with the information thus afforded, and are disposed to take a favourable view of your application. However, they are not at present in circumstances to encourage them to proceed with the view of receiving you at this term, and have therefore instructed me to say that they will take your case into consideration next year; and they hope, if you see proper to continue your application, they may then be able to come to a favourable decision. If, therefore, you continue in the same mind, I shall expect to hear from you by the 20th of March, and would like to know, if we should desire to see you in Edinburgh for examination, whether you would prefer April or October for coming to town.

"I am, yours faithfully,

"G. D. CULLEN."

Accordingly, on the 10th of March, Mr. M'Kean again renewed his application. He had been pained that his hopes had been thus far deferred, but another disappointment awaited him. The Se-

cretary of the Academy replied, "The Committee met yesterday, when I called their attention to your renewed application, and your desire to be admitted at this term. But considering that, if received, you cannot be taken on the funds of the institution till October, as we only support our students while attending in Glasgow during winter, and considering that you are at such a distance from Edinburgh, the Committee are of opinion that your case must be delayed again till September. If we are then encouraged to proceed, you may come to be examined in Edinburgh, and if approved you can proceed to Glasgow without returning home. I hope, therefore, you will approve of the resolution we have come to, in the mean time. I am sorry that you should be kept in uncertainty; but such suspense, though painful, is very salutary to those who are in training for the work of the Lord."

This continued disappointment by no means quenched his ardour, or discouraged his perseverance. On the 12th of August, we find him again renewing his request.

"*Newton-Stewart.*

"DEAR SIR,—I hope you will not think me overpresuming in addressing you again on the subject of my application for admission to the Academy.

Had I, in consequence of any seeming disappointment, felt any abatement in my desires, I would in all probability not have troubled you again with a letter. But instead of an abated, I feel an increased desire that my application may prove successful, and that God would make me a zealous and faithful preacher of his gospel.

* * * * * * *

Your former kindness and promptitude, dear Sir, preclude the necessity of now desiring your prompt attention to this.

"I remain, dear Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"T. S. M'KEAN."

On the 21st of the following October he appeared before the Committee, which met for the examination of candidates, at the Rev. Dr. Patteson's house. He there presented, for their judgment upon it, a brief essay on Sanctification, and addressed them, *vivâ voce*, on Job ix. 2: "But how should man be just with God?" His essay on Sanctification was marked by much simplicity and clearness of thought. After defining the term, he proceeded to show the difference between justification and sanctification, and then argued from Scripture that its production was the peculiar work of the Holy Spirit. He dwelt

upon its two constituent principles—holy love and holy fear—in a manner which clearly indicated that he was writing of those things which he had "tasted, and felt, and handled." He combated the idea of the possibility of these two principles being self-produced, fortifying his statements by reference to the word of God. His next position was that sanctification is a progressive work; and he concluded by exhibiting it as being, in connection with the glory of God, the great end of the atonement. "It is the express declaration of Scripture, that the Lord our Saviour 'gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.' It was for this glorious purpose that our sinful world was visited by Immanuel—for this he vailed his divine nature with a covering of humanity—for this he taught as man never taught—for this, with love altogether unparalleled, he bled—for this, while developing both the perfect efficiency of his blood and his own character as Lord and Saviour, he rose triumphant from the grave, and for this he pleads in heaven."

The decision of the Committee was favourable. His mind was relieved from the suspense in which it had been so long held, and his heavenly Father now gave him the desire of his heart. He left Newton-Stewart respected and beloved. Many fol-

lowed him with their prayers and pious wishes. One testimony, though brief, is expressive.

"DEAR SIR,—Did I not believe that you were going to occupy a more prominent, and consequently a more useful station in the work of religious tuition, I would be disposed to indulge feelings of regret for the loss of such an efficient co-partner in our Sabbath-school, as I have hitherto found you to be; yes, I say it freely, a most efficient co-helper.

"But considering your removal from us as a step in the mysterious progress of the divine purpose, *I dare not will a wish* in opposition, and therefore, not doubting your motive, I only add, GOD SPEED YOU.

"That the import of these emphatic words may be realized by you, is the ardent wish of,

"Sir, yours in love,

"THOS. MURRAY."

CHAPTER III.

COLLEGE LIFE—PREACHING ENGAGEMENTS—INVITATION TO KIRKWALL.

A STUDENT'S college life, especially in its earlier portion, presents little in the shape of incident to interest the minds of others; and yet, to himself, no period is more important in reference to his future history. *Thence* his character takes its cast and complexion. *Then* his habits are formed, his tastes are acquired, and these are points more to be regarded than even the actual amount of knowledge which he gains. He can always increase his stock of information, if he will; but he cannot with as much facility correct an erroneous taste, or resist and alter an injurious habit. The testimony of all who have been called to the superintendence of young men during their preparation for the sacred office is that, with very few exceptions, the character of the student becomes afterwards the character of the minister, whether for better or worse. The spiritually-minded at college become the spiritually-minded in the pastoral office.

The studious and indefatigable as learners, are the diligent and the skilful "workmen who need not be ashamed," when, afterwards, they are called to stand before men to "divide the word of truth." And it is equally and painfully true that those who, having in prospect the high and holy duties of the sanctuary, are yet defective in devotional spirit or studious habits, carry their defects with them into the engagements of their subsequent life. There are exceptions, it must be admitted; but even where the unpromising and unsatisfactory aspect of the period of preparation has been succeeded by a change in personal character and habits—where the levity of the student has given way to a serious and spiritual state of mind—and where a neglect of educational advantages has been followed by a course of vigorous and determined effort after proper and constantly increasing qualification for pastoral usefulness,—this change will be, in almost every instance, discovered to have come as the result of deep affliction and trial,—of humiliating and corrective dispensations, which have met the individual at no very advanced stage in his course, exposing his own heart to his view, abasing him beneath a sense of his deficiencies, and leading him through the sanctifying power of Him who chastens in love and faithfulness, to seek pardon for the past, and to determine upon a holier walk, a more earnest

devotedness, and a conscientious pursuit of all those means in the use of which, under God, pastoral success may be anticipated. But the very severity of the trials by which this change is effected,—the darkness of those days when "he sitteth alone and keepeth silence,"—the distress of those hours when "he layeth his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope,"—is a proof of the difficulty with which former evils are eradicated, and therefore an admonition against their indulgence. There is cause for thankfulness, indeed, when God thus interposes,—when his servant, converted and made wise, can adopt ever after the language of the inspired writer, "Remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall; my soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled within me." But who would not tremble at the indulgence of such a spirit or conduct as must render such discipline needful?

Although, then, there may not be much in the form of incident to interest others in the history of those who are studying for the ministry, there is undoubtedly, on other grounds, a loud and earnest call for the manifestation of a strong and affectionate concern for this important class. For whom should prayer be more earnestly made?—for whom should solicitude be more constantly felt than for those who are to be the future pastors of the church, and who are actually in that position in which it must

be determined what their future character will be? *Is there enough of earnest, affectionate, wrestling prayer for the rising ministry?* There may be, in some individual cases, ground for dissatisfaction and grief, because of the absence of those characteristics which elder Christians and elder ministers would, and, very properly too, desire. But may not the blame of this after all, in some measure, lie at the very door of those who are too ready to utter the language of censure. Admonish, we would say, faithfully, and yet tenderly; rebuke, if necessary, sincerely, and yet affectionately. But, remember, this is not all which their circumstances demand. Pray, oh! pray, for the rising ministry.

It was the peculiar privilege of Mr. M'Kean to enjoy the superintendence and instruction of the late Rev. Greville Ewing and the Rev. Dr. Wardlaw, to whom he never hesitated to declare himself most deeply indebted, and of whose wisdom and high capabilities, in the discharge of their arduous duties, he continued to retain the most grateful sense through the whole course of his future life.

The first event in Mr. M'Kean's student's life which calls for notice is that which he himself records: "Commenced preaching the glorious gospel of the blessed Jesus in May 1836, at Forres, Murrayshire." His next engagement was at Elgin. The Committee of the Congregational Union appointed him to supply the pulpit of the Rev.

Mr. M'Neil, who, at their request, had undertaken to spend a few weeks in the Shetland Islands, chiefly with a view to revisit the wide sphere of the late Rev. Alexander Ken's labours, and to manifest Christian sympathy toward those infant churches in these remote isles which he had been honoured to gather and form. In consequence of this arrangement, a friendship commenced between Mr. M'Neil and the subject of this memoir, which continued till his death. "His services in the gospel at this time were," as testified by the friend whose sphere he temporarily occupied, "acceptable to the saints, and highly appreciated by the public. There were usually pith and point in his preaching. He was a young man of much heart. In his religious attachments, he was warm, steady, and cordial."

It was in the following year that he first visited Kirkwall, the scene of his future labours. He had been appointed to supply at Musselburgh, the respected pastor of the church at that place having resigned his charge, in consequence of the increase of his duties in the office of Secretary to the Congregational Union of Scotland—an office which he long filled with much honour to himself and much advantage to the Union, in its efforts to propagate the truths of the gospel and to encourage the spread of pure and undefiled religion.* From

* See the very interesting "Life of Mr. Watson," by the Rev. W. Lindsay Alexander, D.D., of Edinburgh.—p. 183.

Musselburgh he proceeded to Campbelton, in Argyleshire, where he spent two months pleasantly and profitably. Mr. Watson had proposed to him, while staying at Musselburgh, that he should proceed to the Orkneys, and endeavour, by the blessing of God, to revive the church at Kirkwall. In a letter to Mr. M'Neil, he thus reports progress: "I said that I had no objection to go thither. Accordingly I proceeded from Campbelton, in the latter end of August, to Kirkwall, preaching one Sabbath at Arbroath, one at Wick, and one at Thurso, on my way. * * * * * I was treated with great kindness during my stay in Orkney. I must remember the Orcadians with deep gratitude. The cause was indeed very, very low. The galleries of the chapel had not for years, I suppose, been in use. I suggested the propriety of opening, in the evenings, the door to the galleries; the suggestion seemed to be in 'the nick of time.' The evenings were beginning to get long, and the novelty of the strange preacher served, in a few Sabbaths, to fill almost the whole chapel up and down stairs. The meetings in the evenings, during my stay, continued gradually to increase. I had continual countenance at Stromness also. I went there on a week-day with Mr. and Mrs. Robertson, junior, to see the country, without any intention, when starting, of

attempting a sermon at Stromness. On our way thither, we called upon Mr. Masson, of Harry. I was telling him that we were to remain a night at Stromness; and the thought striking me that I might some way or other unite *business* with pleasure, I asked him if he thought there was a probability of getting a meeting at Stromness. He thought there was. Mr. and Mrs. R. entering cheerfully into the project, we determined to try. Accordingly, after having arrived and taken tea at the inn, Mr. R. inquired of Mr. Robertson, elder in the Secession Church there, if any house-room could be had in which to preach a sermon. Our new friend, Mr. R., entering kindly into the subject also, procured a large ware, or rather lumber room, at the north end of the town. The *bell* was set a-going; service commenced at seven o'clock, and I preached with great pleasure and apparent effect. Several, after the service, came up, and, shaking hands, thanked me. The parish precentor led the singing. He and a few of the men came to me afterwards, wishing me to preach on the subsequent evening; but it being Friday, I could not stay, but promised that I would visit them again the ensuing week, which I did, and had a larger meeting than the former. I had this time a meeting with two of the Kirk Session, and the Elder of the Secession, who had

been hearing me both times, wishing me to visit them regularly with preaching. I had only opportunity once more, however, before leaving Orkney, when the ware-room was quite filled. A preaching station there would meet the desires of the people, and I would have little doubt, under God, of considerable success."

The most interesting proof which could be afforded of the success with which his labours at Kirkwall were attended, was given in the earnest and affectionate invitation, which was addressed to him before he left the Orkneys, to become the pastor of the church among whom he had temporarily dispensed the word of life. "We beg to assure you," was the language of the letter forwarded to him on this occasion, "that your labours for a short period have been most acceptable and profitable to us, and, after united prayer and mutual consultation, we are unanimously of opinion that your piety and other qualifications are such as to render you, by the blessing of God, a useful labourer in the Lord's vineyard." The church which thus invited him to take the oversight of them in the Lord was not, indeed, destitute of a pastor; but the state of his health, and other circumstances prevented him from the full discharge of ministerial duty. It was therefore a great relief to Mr. M'Kean to find it added to this

document, "Our present pastor most cordially concurs with the church in their earnest desire that you should return in the spring and take the pastoral oversight of them in the Lord."

With this token of the divine blessing on his preaching engagements, he returned to resume his studies. Himself and a fellow-student were permitted to prosecute their preparatory work at Aberdeen, on the understanding that they should supply at Banchery and Crichie. "We will have a hard winter's work of it," he wrote to Mr. M'Neil; "but we confide in the promise of vouchsafed strength and grace."

There was much in his disposition and character that was calculated to win upon those with whom he was brought into Christian intercourse. Affectionate and frank, his whole demeanour invited and inspired confidence; and hence, during his short stay at Kirkwall, he not only secured respect by his public services, but produced such an impression in private, by his amiable and open-hearted bearing as that at once a friendship sprung up between himself and the members of some of those families to which he was introduced—a friendship which lasted until death. On his arrival at Aberdeen, he thus described, in a letter to one of his attached Kirkwall friends, the perils of his return. The letter is dated 17th November, 1837.

"It is more than probable that you know before this time of my arrival at Aberdeen, as I transmitted a newspaper the morning after my arrival here. I am happy now to inform you of my welfare, and I trust this will find you, Mr. R., and Eliza, well. We had a tolerably quick, though at the same time a pretty boisterous passage hither. I am well pleased, however, now that I am safe on *terra firma*, that I have once in my life beheld such a scene. It is truly 'the sublime'—a storm at sea; neither painting nor poetry can do justice to it. To realize its grand, terrific, and overpowering effect upon the mind, it must be witnessed. * * * * * * * We had some difficulty in beating out of the bay, after we set sail that evening, in consequence of the increasing strength of the wind. The vessel, on account of the nature of her cargo, not being in good sailing trim, refused once or twice to come round the point; which circumstance had rather a damping influence on the mind, when putting to sea on such a voyage, in such a night, at this season of the year. We at last weathered the point, and scudded away at a pretty smart rate before the wind, with alternate showery squalls of wind and cheering blinks of moonlight. As the night had a threatening appearance, I felt no inclination to go to bed; so I gave up my berth

to Dr. P———, who was very ill. I put on my mackintosh and travelling-cap, expecting no small share of salt-water; and after committing myself to Him 'who holds the winds in his fists, and the waters in the hollow of his hands,' I took my station beside the captain at the helm. As we receded from the land—the wind continuing to rise—the sea, in consequence, became increasingly troubled. But the captain, who was very kind and attentive to me, and who evidently is no ordinary seaman, began to prepare for the storm, by ordering the sailors to take off the main-sail, and put up in its stead a small sail with a reef in it, termed the try-sail; and fortunate it was he did so, for the sea and wind which we encountered before day-break would have carried the main-sail and mast overboard. The captain got me persuaded about midnight to go below, and try to take some rest; and as I felt very cold and tired from standing in one position (the tossing of the vessel preventing me from walking about), I thought I would attempt it. He prepared my bed upon the cabin floor, and, having rolled myself in your warm blankets, I essayed to sleep. You may expect, however, that it was only an essay. Sleep I could not, had I been inclined, for I was disposed to think that almost every article in the cabin came in tumbling contact with my prostrate body. I rested

my limbs for some time, and again attempted to reach the deck. It was then that I witnessed a truly sublime, though awfully terrific sight. The first thing that caught my eye when I had scrambled up the cabin ladder, and put my head out, was a tremendous wave, far up betwixt me and the horizon, apparently about to fall upon our little fragile bark and overwhelm us. I involuntarily shrunk back. Our vessel, however, by an awful rise, was soon like a cockle-shell seated upon its top. I scrambled up, holding fast with both feet and hands, until I seized hold of the boat upon deck, when I turned again to behold the scene. Whilst I was in the act of turning, the captain, who was still at the helm, cried out, "Take care of yourself, sir,—crouch down, sir." He had scarcely uttered the words, and I obeyed them, when sweep went the sail from one side of the deck to the other; by which, had I remained standing, I would doubtless have been launched over into the remorseless wave. At the remembrance of this circumstance, I desire 'to bless the Lord with all my soul.' As day-light appeared, though the storm did not at all abate, yet it became less dismal, and I could with less of the feeling of the terrible behold the sublimity of the scene. But it behoves me to draw to a close. We reached Aberdeen, all in safety,

about five o'clock on Sabbath afternoon. So you see I have to sing of mercy as well as of judgment."

His studies were vigorously resumed. They were pleasant for their own sake; but they were chiefly interesting to him, from being regarded as a fitting and necessary preparation for that high and holy employment which he had in prospect. He thus affords a glimpse of his mode of life, as well as of his spiritual views, to the dear friend to whom he had already written: "I thank you for your kind inquiries. I have been better and worse, but still able to attend to my studies and other avocations, for which I desire to be grateful to the Giver of all good. I have always been very susceptible of colds during my seasons of college study, and I find that this susceptibility still accompanies me. * * * I rejoice to sympathize with you, my dear sister, in your views regarding the necessity of the outpouring of the Spirit from on high. This must be the effect of believing and untiring prayer to God. But believing prayer can do everything; it is omnipotent. Let us all, therefore, pray 'for times of refreshing from the presence of God.' * * * I am indeed very, very busy, almost tired out by Saturday, and do not find my drive [into the country to preach] as pleasant as you might anticipate. I always feel more tired

when I return from the country than when I go out. I am very happy to know that you are interested in the success of my labours. I desire a continued interest in your prayers—that the 'word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified.' * * * The people with whom I lodge are very kind and attentive to all our wants, and desire to make us comfortable. I have not had a Sabbath rest since I arrived. * * * My studies during the week are chemistry, natural history, and geology. I am very fond of them, and this makes the work lighter."

The invitation to Kirkwall began now to press heavily upon his mind. Some reply must be given to it; and the question, whether affirmatively or negatively, gave rise to painfully conflicting thoughts. In deciding on this matter, he felt that he was called upon to come to a determination upon a previous point which had always been before his mind, with more or less of impressiveness, since he gave himself to the work of the ministry, but which of late had more than ever engrossed his thoughts. He had read, not without deep emotion, the varied statements which had been published by eye-witnesses of the darkness which still covered millions of his fellow-immortals in heathen lands. The success, too, which had attended the labours of devoted missionaries had contributed to invest

their self-denying and arduous engagements with an inspiring and animating aspect. Often, very often his desire to become a messenger of the glad tidings of the gospel to a foreign shore appeared to be predominant, and he would all but make up his mind to offer his services to the Missionary Society. Relative circumstances, however, and more especially a sense of duty to his mother, who was then partially dependent upon him, caused him to hesitate. He knew the privilege of access to the all-wise God. He carried his burden to him, and pleaded that his anxiety might be removed, and that "wisdom profitable to direct" might be afforded to him. As a means under God of ascertaining "the way which he should take," he asked the advice of those whose standing in the ministry, and experience in prosecuting the work of the Lord, qualified them to form a judgment as to his duty. One of these, the Rev. J. Watson, whose pulpit he had shortly before supplied, thus responded to the statement of conflicting views, which Mr. M'Kean had addressed to him.

Pinkie-Burn, 19*th December*, 1837.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Mr. Cullen sent me your letter the other day. I see by it that you hesitate as to what course you should pursue, now that you are about to enter fully on the important work to

which you have devoted yourself; and in such a case as yours, one can scarcely give advice without fear and trembling, lest he should go wrong, and lest, if his advice should be acted upon, there should afterwards be cause to regret having taken it.

"You have a call to one part of the vineyard, and you have some bias of mind towards another and very distant part. The *first* certainly presents very little encouragement in regard to temporalities, or in regard to any name or note among the workmen; but it is a field which greatly needs to be cultivated, and which may give a return of fruit for eternal glory beyond what would be produced in a foreign clime. We often hear the remark, 'It is easy to get labourers for home, but not so easy to get them for the heathen.' Now I confess I do not quite readily subscribe to this. My views may appear somewhat strange; but I am inclined to think that the man who, with all the prospects which the field presents, is ready to sit down in Orkney just for the good of souls, manifests as much *missionary* zeal as the man that goes to India, and even somewhat more of self-denial. I am not making little of foreign labours; oh! I hope I never shall; but a soul is as precious in one part of the world as in another. And I have often been struck with so much being made of the conversion of a few in

some distant part, beyond what is made of the conversion of many more at home. Beside, we really need to bear in more upon our own country, if we would send the gospel abroad. You will easily see, then, that I shall be glad if you comply with the call from the north; but I trust I shall be far from saying that you do wrong if you make offer of your services for a foreign clime. No doubt the Lord does often so incline to a particular department of labour, that one has no rest until he give himself to it, and really another cannot be a judge in such a case.

"I am sure you seek direction from the Lord. Be but willing to be guided by him, and he will lead in the right way. He will break it up for you; but he may for a time lead, as one does a blind man. Try to weigh your motives well. Much, oh! very much, depends on this; and much of the future comfort of your mind, wherever you go, and whether you be successful or not, will depend on a consciousness that you were actuated by pure motives—the glory of the blessed Redeemer, and the salvation of souls—not personal ease or honour below.

"I had a letter lately from Mr. Ramsay, who speaks highly of your abundant and acceptable labours in different parts of Orkney. He seems to expect your return. I am glad to hear good

accounts of our friend Mr. Blellock also. Mr. Masson is better.

"It will give me pleasure to hear at any time from you. Mrs. W. unites in very kind regards to you and Mr. Elrick. I hope you both get comfortably on. May your labours be crowned with success.

"I have just been at the funeral of ————. It has been a most appalling case; he was separated from the church. There have been no signs of repentance, but the contrary. He was seized with fever last week, and died in a few days. Oh! what a warning. Mr. Hill is very ill, and not expected to recover. May *we* be prepared for the solemn change.

"Yours very truly,

"JOHN WATSON."

This letter and others, from friends who were deeply interested in his welfare, induced him at length to relinquish, at least for the present, his thoughts of missionary engagement. He was now in a condition to consider the next question—whether or not he should accept the call to Kirkwall. Among other advisers from whom he sought counsel was his venerable tutor, the Rev. Greville Ewing, whose reply on this occasion, marked by all the simplicity, judiciousness, and Christian affection,

which were so eminently his characteristics, cannot fail of being read with interest.

"*Glasgow, 23rd January*, 1838.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Your letter which I received the other day gave me great pleasure, as it assured me of the kindness of our heavenly Father towards you and Mr. Elrick, and others of our fellow-labourers in the vineyard. I would unite with you in thanksgiving, that you have been carried in safety by sea and land in so many journeys, and to so many important spheres of usefulness. May the Lord of the harvest strengthen you for study and labour, and crown all with abundant success.

"I have been in all the places you mention, except Orkney. I pray you may receive better advice than any I can give respecting the call given you by the church in Kirkwall. Consider the following points: How long you and they have been acquainted with one another; how far your intercourse has been in general congenial, spiritual, and devotional. Have your hearts burned within you while you walked together, and Jesus talked with you and opened to you the Scriptures? Have the churches in Orkney rest, and are they edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, are they multiplied? Are the pastors already in Orkney favourable to

your call? Are you and they kindred spirits? and is your mind inclined to the field of labour? And if there be many adversaries, is there also a competent number of brethren, the sight of whom may make you thank God and take courage? Pray that you and they may be equally preserved from lightness—that you should, either in principle or practice, have the charge of letting your conversation be 'yea and nay' brought against you. Some examples of instability, like that of the Galatian Churches to Paul, prevent us from being 'ignorant of the devices of Satan.'

"I shall be happy to hear from Mr. Elrick when convenient. Miss Cathcart joins me in kind regards to you both. I am very sorry to say that my dear brother, Dr. Wardlaw, has been visited with a severe pain in his side. My eyes continue dim and my strength weak, but I am able to preach once a day. Tell Mr. J. Kennedy I was much obliged to him for his letter. I shall be glad if he can visit Glasgow again before he goes.

"I remain, my dear Sir,

"Yours very truly,

"GREVILLE EWING."

On the points thus raised for serious and prayerful examination, Mr. M'Kean's attention was anxiously fixed, and the result he communicated to his friend Mr. M'Neil.

"My mind, after much prayer and consideration, has been led to give Kirkwall another probationary trial, ere I return any decisive answer to the invitation. I have communicated this to the church, hoping that they will see the propriety of this step, as it appears to my own mind that the contemplated union is of too solemn a character (involving, as it does, consequences whose importance can be viewed, with any right degree of appreciation, only in the light of eternity) to rush into without some manifest indications to both parties that God forms it. If God should please to encourage me on my return, as he did when there last, it is more than probable that I may remain in Orcadia."

He accordingly visited the Orkneys again, and speedily and cordially assented to the wishes of the church. In his reply to them, having expressed his sense of the overwhelming importance of the question on which he called to decide, he adds, "And now, after much prayer and some months' consideration, from the leadings of Providence, which I have observed in the matter, I have to intimate to you that my present duty appears to be that of accepting the invitation with which you have honoured me, by taking the pastoral oversight of you in the Lord. I could not, however, have come to this decision,

unless I had been confident in your willingness to grant me the following requests; namely, your prayers, your sympathies, and your forbearance. My prosperity as a minister of the gospel demands the first; the trials peculiar to my work among you demand the second; and while I, in common with yourselves, bear about with me a mortal body, the reasonableness and necessity of the third request will be both seen and felt. What I have thus requested, I pray the God of all grace to enable me to reciprocate."

It is added in a postscript, "I wish it to be understood that I do not undertake the charge with the understanding that I shall preach thrice every Lord's-day. Facts in the history of our churches have evinced that the real efficiency of a minister's labours, taken as a whole, is impaired by this custom; and certain it is, from the very nature of things, that the period of his active labour is greatly shortened by it."

On Wednesday, the 4th of July, he was publicly ordained as pastor over the church. The interesting services of the day were commenced by his friend Mr. Blellock. Mr. Ramsay, the former pastor, delivered the introductory discourse. Mr. Masson of Harry gave the charge, and Mr. Robertson of Thurso addressed the church. The attendance was good, and the services throughout

the day impressive and interesting. Mr. M'Kean's replies to the usual questions were characterized by much feeling, good sense, and fervent piety. Mr. Ramsay, the former pastor of the church, who had laboured among them gratuitously for a long series of years, manifested the most cordial interest in the settlement of his successor, and promised to give him assistance whenever occasion might require, and to strengthen his hands in the work of the Lord.

CHAPTER IV.

PASTORAL LIFE.

On the 8th of July, 1838, Mr. M'Kean entered upon his stated labours as the pastor of the church. The text which he chose on this occasion was expressive of his own deep sense of the difficulties and responsibilities of the charge which he had undertaken: 1 Thess. v. 25, "Brethren, pray for us."

"From the period at which he accepted the oversight of the little flock at Kirkwall, and was actually ordained over them in the Lord, he unreservedly identified himself with them. He sought not theirs, but them. He devoted his undivided energies to their spiritual interests, and to a revival of the Lord's work among them, and in 'the region round about.' He was a man of decision and energy. His temperament was ardent; and he threw a large portion of soul into every part of duty to which he put his hand. He made it his business to 'do the work of an evangelist,' and to

'make full proof of his ministry.' His Christian friends were stimulated and encouraged. Some tokens for good were vouchsafed to them. The Lord seemed to 'give a nail in his holy place,' and to afford 'them a little reviving in the midst of their bondage.'" *

Of his brief pastorate the following extracts from communications to his friends will give a just and vivid view: "I have the happiness to know that I live in the affections and prayers of my people. They are few in number, and the greater number of them are poor in this world; but I trust they are 'rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom.' For kindness and sympathy they are all I could wish. I teach a Bible Class on the Friday evenings, from eight to nine o'clock. The attendance is from ten to fourteen. This is a very interesting class. I have found much profit and pleasure in it. Two of the number are members of the church; the others are hopeful young persons. They are all growing fast in scriptural knowledge. I trust also that the knowledge acquired by some of them has had effect on the heart. A Sabbath-school has also been set on foot since I returned; it is as yet but thinly attended. We have two weekly evening meetings. One is on Tuesday evening, for the

* Letter from the Rev. Mr. M'Neil of Elgin.

special object of prayer for revival of religion in our own souls and among our families. This meeting has been established about eleven months. It is held in the houses of the brethren alternately. I hope good has resulted from it to the church in general. The other meeting is held in the chapel on Thursday evening, which is well attended by the members."

While "watching for souls," as one "that must give account," he felt the force of the Apostle's monition, "Take heed to thyself," and sought to exercise an habitual vigilance over the state of his own heart, and the health of his own soul. "I am happy," he records, "to be enabled to say that I am in the enjoyment of excellent health of body, although I have had some very fatiguing itinerating journeys since I came from the south. I have often observed that, although I have had a good many drenchings of rain since I began my labours in the field, yet I have never felt that such exposures in the service of my Master have left any serious or permanent bodily complaint. I have had not a little experience of trial, both mentally and corporeally, since I commenced the life and labours of a pastor; yet I can surely say that the 'yoke is easy and the burden light.' I desire to say this. Oh! may I feel it to be so more and more! I wish I could say so much of my

spiritual health. Oh! the deadness of the heart and affections to spiritual and eternal things! Perhaps there cannot be a more convincing proof of the utter averseness and enmity of the natural heart to God and divine things than that which is presented in the frequent apathy and indifference of even the renewed heart. 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?' The fact to which I have alluded is fully evinced by the Apostle's experience, which led to the utterance of the above exclamation. * * I feel my heart in such a state at times that I cannot pray; but on these occasions I have often found that the prayers of others have relieved me. I have found also, on the other hand, that, even in these states, falling down and praying for others has relieved me. This shows us that the religion of Jesus is not selfish; it takes hold on the principle of sociability in our nature; it is truly a social system, uniting the sympathies of all the redeemed, both in heaven and on earth, in one brotherhood of feeling."

There was about his personal religion a depth of sincerity. He continually dealt with his own soul as in the immediate presence of the all-seeing God; and although the exercises of his spirit were sometimes of a painfully affecting character, yet they proved that the piety after

which he aimed was not that which was merely official or professional, but that, as well for his own sake as from a regard to the successful discharge of his ministry, he sought to have his heart right with God. "Oh, I have a cold heart to my exalted Redeemer," is the utterance of his inmost soul in writing to a friend. "I was preaching on Sabbath evening on the love of the Father, the Son, and the Divine Spirit, as exhibited in the justification, sanctification, and salvation of rebel man. The subject is one of the sublimest that mortal tongue can reach, and yet I could not feel it. My heart has been cold, very cold, for some days back. I thought surely my subject would arouse me from the lethargy, yet it has not. I wish you were here at this moment. The first request I would make to you would be to kneel with me at the footstool of our heavenly Father, that we might pour out our hearts before him. I know it would give me relief and peace. Pray for me. How often do we need to be broken down to the dust and raised up again! * * * * * *

I have read over the 51st Psalm this evening, and wept over it. How did my heart sympathize with that petition in verse 12, 'Restore unto me the joy of my salvation!' I have made it my own. I have presented it. I am now presenting it. Oh, how precious is the mercy-seat! Ever near—

walking, lying, sitting, or even writing, we can approach it! And oh, how precious the divine volume!

> 'A sovereign balm for every wound,
> A cordial for our fears.'

"I resume my pen, after a sorrowful yet sweet season of prayer. I went to my knees, with the Bible in my hand open. I made its language, and I trust in some measure its spirit also, my own. It has been a good season for my soul. Continue, dear Saviour, to restore unto me the joy of thy salvation! I have this evening experienced the value of kindred sympathy in the divine life. I begun to tell to you the sorrows of my heart, and this led me to pour out my heart before God."

His deep and earnest anxiety for the promotion and revival of real religion, in the hearts of those who were committed to his charge, led him to the adoption of a plan which he thus describes:—

"I have commenced a course of visitation which may be considered to have the character of novelty attached to it. It is new here. I intimate on the Sabbath-day that I will visit so many families on such a day of the week, naming the day and the families that I intend visiting. I intimate, moreover, that it is not the customary catechetical visitation of families that has been exercised among

people in these lands for so long which I have in view, but that I intend to converse privately with every individual in the respective families, regarding the experience, hopes, doubts, and fears of their individual souls,—that they must understand that I am to converse with the husband apart, the wife apart, and every child in the family which has reached the years of responsibility apart, on the subjects concerning their faith, and hopes, and prospects for eternity. I have commenced the system of visitation. I trust the hand of the Lord was in the undertaking. I have had some delightful intercourse; and the result already has been that four individuals have desired the fellowship of the church."

The encouragements, however, which attended his ministry were mingled with trials into which none but a pastor can fully enter, but which, while they wound the spirit, are nevertheless salutary. They inculcate the necessity of dependence on the great Shepherd; they give an opportunity of proving fidelity to the Master whom we serve; they are inlets through which much precious consolation enters the soul; they render the spirit tender and susceptible; and at the same time they prevent the mischief which might, through the deceitfulness of the human heart, accrue from uninterrupted prosperity and unmingled success. "I

must begin this," he writes, "by telling you my joys and sorrows. On the past Sabbath I had two duties to perform; the one very painful, and the other very pleasing. There is truly nothing unmixed below." He then describes the necessity under which he had been brought of suspending from the fellowship-church one of the leading members, who had by open sin brought disgrace upon his profession of religion. It is satisfactory to add, that the individual referred to subsequently gave unequivocal proof of sincere repentance, and, having been re-admitted to the communion of the church, continued till his death to walk consistently with that sorrow for his sin which he publicly expressed. "The pleasing duty which immediately followed this one was that of proposing to the church the names of four individuals whom I trust the Lord has received. * * The night after I had found this brother in the sin alluded to was one of bitter sorrow to my soul. I was much cast down; but when the Lord humbles, he will also exalt in due time. 'My soul, wait thou patiently on the Lord.' The day following I had the happiness of conversing with these individuals desiring fellowship with us. 'Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.' 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.'"

The spiritual interests of the young lay very

near his heart. There was everything in his disposition and manner which was calculated to win them, and to give him an advantage in communicating with them, in reference to the concerns of their souls. He thus responded to the request of one who in early life was called to suffering and weakness, and who had asked that he would write to him.

"*Kirkwall*, 16*th May*, 1840.

"My dear young Friend,—As you have requested through Miss R—— that I would write you a few lines, and as I am inclined with all cheerfulness to comply with it, I accordingly take up my pen to address you.

"My dear George, I left you very weak and far spent in physical strength; so far reduced—indeed, that I have no prospect of ever seeing you again in this world; and this conviction the more strongly impresses my mind when I consider the nature of your disease, and the length of time during which it has been preying upon your constitution. Indeed, had that constitution not been an uncommonly strong and robust one, your disease must have carried you off long ere now. When I thus tell you, candidly and affectionately, my impression of the state of your body, I hope you will not entertain the idea that I wish to frighten or alarm

you; this, I assure you, is far from my intention. I desire, however, to deal fairly and faithfully unto you, according to my own convictions. You know, my dear George, and perhaps you yourself may have experienced it, that many people, from various causes (sometimes from a defective affection which does not embrace the interests of the soul as well as of the body, and sometimes from a fear of entertaining a thought of death, or of speaking about it), continue to buoy up the mind of the invalid with false and delusive hopes of recovery, and carefully avoid leading the poor sufferer to think of his soul, or the great concerns of eternity, until he goes to death and the judgment, unpardoned and unredeemed. I have often seen this done, aye, and that too by those who should have known better, by parents who professed the gospel, and also by ministers, whose duty it was, whether in the pulpit or in the chamber of the sick and dying, to preach the gospel. That affection, my dear George, which does not *embrace the whole destiny of its object*, the future as well as the present, the interests of the soul as well as those of the body, is, let people say what they may about it, a spurious, a false affection.

"I do, my dear George, wish and pray that your body may be restored to health; but I must be plain with you again, when I say that I do

wish, and pray more ardently still, that your immortal spirit may be saved—that your soul may be in health. When we pray for the restoration of bodily health, we must do so with submission to the will of God. We do not know whether or not he designs that it may be restored, because he has given no direct promise on the subject; but when we pray for the salvation and restoration of the soul, we can do so with all confidence, fervency, and importunity, because he has said, 'Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.' This is the distinction between anxiety about the body and anxiety about the soul.

"From our conversations together, I do hope that you know and act upon the distinction thus alluded to. You may remember that I put the following question to you, 'Are you more desirous, George, that this long affliction may be blessed by God to the interests of your undying soul than that it should be removed from your body?' I cannot express to you, my dear young friend, the happiness I felt when you answered unhesitatingly, and as I believe from your heart, 'Yes.' Now, my dear George, if this continues to be your daily prayer, your growing, your living and dying desire, I may venture to say that you will be enabled, with David, to bless God that ever you were afflicted. If you commit

your soul and body into the hands of God, you may, with all safety and peace of mind, leave all the consequences of your present affliction with him also. For whether the affliction be 'unto death' or not, then for you 'to live will be Christ, and to die' unspeakable 'gain.' Keep 'looking unto Jesus,' beholding 'the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world.' No sinner ever perished 'looking unto Jesus.' Take all your sins and sorrows frequently every day to God. Pour your heart out before him. He is your high confidence. Tell all your griefs, and pains, and faults to him, as you would tell them to your earthly father. You know he is our Father who is in heaven. And you know he has said, 'If you confess your sins, God is faithful and just to forgive you your sins, and the blood of Jesus Christ, God's own Son, cleanseth us from all unrighteousness.' May the Lord himself preserve you by his mighty power, through faith unto salvation. Farewell.

"I remain, my dear George,

"Your affectionate friend,

"T. S. M'KEAN."

He diligently improved the opportunity, which affliction in the families of his friends and congregation afforded him, of dealing faithfully with the

conscience, while he sought to comfort the heart. He wept with those who wept; but at the same time, alive to the importance of the lessons which God is wont to impart in the school of affliction, he felt the solemn responsibility of setting forth these plainly and decidedly, and of affectionately calling attention to them. With this object in view, he thus addressed a young friend, who with her family had been visited by the pressure of a heavy sorrow.

"*Kirkwall, 6th August,* 1840.

"My dear Miss R——, Your letter of the first came duly to hand; and though it was the bearer of painful intelligence, yet there were not a few features in it calculated to impart much pleasure. One in particular I may mention, which led my mind to the conclusion that the Lord had afflicted you for your profit. I allude to the spirit of *bowing*, and I trust *willing* resignation which it manifested. Mrs. M'Kean and myself do unfeignedly sympathize with you and your afflicted family in this trying dispensation, and we hereby present our individual and united condolence. We would thus, in as far as our peculiar circumstances permit, obey the law of our Saviour, and mourn with those that mourn, 'bearing each other's burdens, and so fulfilling the law of Christ.' We would at all times remember,

however, that our mourning must be that of full and entire resignation to the righteousness and even *love* of that dispensation which calls it forth. Our mourning must not be of such a character as identifies itself with *repining*, not of such a character as would have *undone* that which *has been done*. No: this would not be 'hearing the rod,' and 'bowing to Him that hath appointed it,' but the very opposite. This would be 'the potsherd striving with the Maker.' I do believe and hope from your letter and spirit that this is not the character of your sorrow; but that it has its origin rather in a serious review of your own state, and of your past unimproved opportunities. This is as it should be, because this is the very lesson that God intends you to learn by the dispensation. The very words that God speaks to you, to every member of your family, by it are these, 'Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh.' This is the very language of God in the dispensation to father and to mother, to sister and to brother, as individuals. And, oh! my dear Miss R——, I beseech of you to hear the divine voice, and give yourself wholly and unreservedly to God. The late dispensation, though a painful, is yet a precious one to your spiritual interests, if *immediately* and *faithfully* improved. The Lord by it has softened your heart, and ren-

dered it peculiarly susceptible of divine, eternal, and saving impressions. When the heart resists the melting influences of love, it must yield to the application of other means; when the flinty rock refuses to yield to the influence of heat, then 'the hammer' is upraised which breaks it in pieces. Now God has been using painful means for the softening of all your hearts, but yet these means have been used in the greatest love to your souls. He has been saying indeed, 'From all your idols I will cleanse you;' but it is in order that he himself may obtain the full possession of and dominion over your hearts. Nothing will satisfy God but *a whole heart*, and nothing will bring real peace and rejoicing to the immortal soul but *a whole Christ*. To have peace with God, through the Lord Jesus Christ, we must be reconciled, wholly and entirely reconciled to his will, reconciled in thought, in motive, in desire, in word, in action. In all things God's will must be our will.

"You ask me, my dear Miss R——, what it is to trust in Christ? Now the most simple and direct answer that I can give is, that it is *just taking God at his word*. I am a perishing sinner—must for ever perish, unless some hand interpose to deliver. I see this; I feel this. In this alarming state, and overwhelmed by this awful prospect, God reveals himself. I hear him say, 'It is a faithful

saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, even the chief.' These blessed words bring light to my mind and life to my soul. Treasure up that—'Christ came to save the chief of sinners.' This is God's own word. I am chief of sinners, therefore Christ came to save me. I take God at this his word, and in doing so I have peace and joy. And because of such a deliverance, I, of necessity and irresistibly, *love* the Deliverer; my heart is at once, and irresistibly from this view, given up to him. And you know that whatever object has the whole *heart* has the whole *life* also; the one is the necessary effect of the other. This is the simple view that I have learned of faith from the Scriptures,—a trusting in God for life and salvation. Here you have the germ of the whole Christian life. I shall be happy, at another time, to go more fully into this topic, as well as into every other that you may suggest.

"I beseech you, my dear Miss R——, to cherish the impression produced on your mind by the late dispensation. Be very much with God in secret. Go to him very frequently during the day, and pour out your heart before him. Tell him all your sorrows, all your sins, all your wants, all your temptations. Keep nothing back; tell him everything more fully, more freely than you

would to the nearest, the dearest bosom friend. This is having confidence in God. He invites you to it: 'Ye people, pour out your hearts before him.' He is your high confidence.

"Give yourself much to reading his blessed word. There you will find counsel, direction, precious consolation: this is having your conversation with God. Keep always some word of God treasured up in your mind and heart, so that you can meditate on it while your hands are busied about other matters: this is having fellowship with God. And let it be your prayer every morning that God would give you the *way* as well as the *will* to be useful to the souls of your brothers, sisters, and all the family, and all with whom you come in contact. Ask, in the sight of God, at night what you have done in this form during the day. This will keep up your sense of responsibility. Beware of living a whole day in a sinful and perishing world, if you love the Saviour and have opportunity (and daily you will have opportunity), without speaking some words for your Saviour, without doing something for your perishing fellow-men. What I have now said to you, I have said from much affection to you and to your family, and from a sense of my responsibility to God for the opportunity which our acquaintanceship has presented. We must

all appear before the judgment-seat of God. Consequences are involved in our acquaintance-ship and intercourse which are eternal. I am responsible, not only for my intercourse with men in public, but also in private; and I believe that I will have to answer for the kind of intercourse that I have had in the one way as well as in the other, and therefore it behoves me, for my own sake, to be faithful to the souls of all with whom I come in contact. And from the affection I entertain for your family, I consider it a high privilege to speak to you for God. And I do trust and pray that our intercourse on earth, whether by voice or correspondence, may be remembered by us all with delight throughout eternity. What I have said to *you*, I intend also for dear M——, to whom remember me in the kindest regards.

"Present my felt sympathy and condolence to your dear parents, and kind love to the boys, in which Mrs. M'Kean affectionately joins. May the God of grace pour in upon all your hearts that 'peace which passeth all understanding.' May your names be written in the Book of Life. May you all, parents and children, have a name and a place 'among the living in Jerusalem.'

"Ever yours,

"T. S. M'KEAN."

The deep impression which the above letter proves him to have cherished of his personal responsibility, he endeavoured to communicate to others. Delighting in usefulness and watching for souls himself, he continually urged upon his friends the duty of losing no opportunity of doing good. In another letter, to one of the members of his church on a visit to a relative at a distance from home, he refers to the Christian's obligation to seek the spiritual welfare of others. "I am rejoiced that you have embraced an opportunity of speaking to your dear sister. It has been my constant prayer, since you went away, that you may be blessed in being made a blessing to the family. I have delivered two sermons on revivals, which I trust and pray may be owned and blessed of God. Continue to pray that God may shine upon us with his countenance. * * * * I wish you had been here during this season. If the Lord has work for you to do in Thurso, then I rejoice. See to it, my dear sister, when you leave Thurso, that you can meet the consequences of your intercourse at the judgment-seat. Leave a savour of the name you bear, by a walk and conversation becoming the gospel. We are 'living epistles.' People of the world read *us* when they neglect the Bible; and if we, by a walk close to God, are enabled

to commend the gospel to others, and especially to those who are 'bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh,' we are 'glorifying God in our bodies and spirits which are his,' and preaching the gospel in our lives which we are professing with our lips. But if, on the other hand, we are such 'living epistles' as are calculated to lead those with whom we have intercourse to despise us, and to ridicule the gospel which we profess, how awful will our sinfulness be! May God in his mercy save us from this."

Although Mr. M'Kean had seen it his duty to become the pastor of a church at home, and had entered upon the responsibilities of his office with that energy and devotedness which characterized him in the pursuit of every object in which he felt an interest, yet he was by no means less impressed now by the claims of the perishing heathen than at the period at which, had circumstances favoured, he had serious thoughts of offering himself as a missionary. The prospect, indeed, of publishing the gospel far off among the Gentiles, he had never entirely given up. His choice of Kirkwall as a sphere of usefulness was even, in some degree, owing to that love to missionary work which still lingered in his heart. He felt that a pastoral charge in the northern outskirts of the British Isles bore some resemblance to a foreign

mission, while it left him nearer his relatives and more free to discharge those claims upon his care and attention which, in his judgment, some of them still possessed. Such a station, too, might be deemed not an inappropriate school in which to be trained as a missionary in more distant regions, and, under the pressure of more formidable difficulties, at some future period of his life. Such were his own views, as he communicated them to a dear and confidential friend. Instead, therefore, of the intention, if the Lord should so permit, of ultimately labouring among the heathen being any drawback to him in his pastorate, it was the very circumstance which gave a character of energy and enterprise to his home operations. He sought to be prompt and diligent in the present discharge of his office, because he felt that he might not always have the opportunity of serving the spiritual interests of his flock; and his expectations, distant as their accomplishment might be, supplied a continual motive for the maintenance of those habits of spiritual devotedness and of holy zeal which he felt were of the first importance to the Christian missionary. He was "*a good minister of Jesus*" at home, because he never relinquished the hope of being a *missionary for Christ* abroad.

Among the people of whom he held the oversight, it was, under these circumstances, very natural that he should be anxious to diffuse an

interest in the condition of those who are sitting in the darkness of ignorance and superstition. He laid stress upon the monthly missionary prayer-meetings, and endeavoured, by reading information upon the varied fields of foreign labour, to stimulate his flock to plead much for the heathen, and for those who were "spending and being spent" among them. An interesting incident, recorded in his own words, will serve to show that he succeeded, at least, in investing missionary work with an air of attractiveness.

"A circumstance occurred lately which has given me much joy and encouragement. Two of my Bible-class scholars called upon me, saying that they had something particular to talk to me about. The matter was, that they wanted to go out as teachers to the heathen. They are both under twenty years of age. One of them said, she had been thinking on the subject for more than a year. They had both been led to think of it more seriously from the accounts read from the 'Missionary Chronicle' at the monthly prayer-meeting, which had been received from two females who were engaged in the instruction of the young in India. I conversed with them some time; asked them if they had calculated upon all the difficulties and importance of the work, as well as looked upon it in all its high

character and glory, and if they thought that they themselves were prepared to go out as teachers of others. The last question rather staggered them; and the conclusion we came to was, that they should avail themselves of all the means in their power of cultivating their minds, and of growing in spiritual and biblical knowledge. I advised them to acquaint themselves with the true character of missionary labour—to cherish the desire in their hearts; and if it continued and grew, I told them that at the end of two or three years they might then be enabled to decide. In the course of our conversation, I asked them if they had done anything in missionary work at home—if they had read the Scriptures to their ignorant neighbours, and conversed with them about divine things. The eldest had been in the habit of leaving tracts in a neighbouring district for some time, and speaking with the people. But, as she observed, the people can all read, and they think that they are already all religious. I asked them, again, if they had ever thought of meeting to pray for the heathen abroad and at home. They answered that they had been thinking of it for some time, but they did not know where to meet. I proposed the chapel vestry, in the Sabbath evenings immediately after the evening service. Three of these young people, females,

met there last Sabbath for the first time. One of them told me that the subject of prayer was the divine blessing on the word preached to the evening audience. All the three engaged in prayer, and read suitable passages of Scripture intermediately. May the Lord bless, and keep, and preserve these dear young ones."

The same constraining influence of the love of Christ which induced him to labour diligently in his own immediate sphere, and to keep in view the possibility of being called to share in the difficulties and the triumphs of the cause of Christ abroad, led him to join with other brethren in "doing the work of an evangelist" in the "region round about" that in which he was located. "I have just been," he writes, "at Harry for thirteen days, preaching every day, with the exception of the first and last of my stay. I was well nigh worn out; and though not *tired of the work*, I was assuredly *tired in it*. Considerable good has already resulted. Not a few dead sinners were awakened during the time of our meetings, and led to cry out, 'What shall I do to be saved?' while the brethren in the fellowship of the gospel themselves have experienced a considerable reviving. The work is still going quietly forward in some of the smaller islands contiguous to Rendall. In one of these islands, the young and old together have been engaged in

prayer during the greater part of some nights. On one occasion they met at eight o'clock, and continued in prayer until two the next morning, as many as twenty-one engaging in prayer. While at Harry, we (the pastors) were sent for to 'come over and help them' in those islands."

A letter to his friend Mr. M'Neil will convey an impression of the ardour with which he entered into these works of faith and labour of love.

"We are as a church enjoying some prosperity in the Lord. You would hear of the meetings for the revival of God's work among us, which were held some time back. We had for our season, two weeks, the brethren Wiseman, Masson, and Blellock, and for the first week brother Brown from Leswick, and for the last week brother M'Kenzie of Elie. Upon the whole, we had a precious and profitable season. * * * * * * The Lord has been very near to me. I have truly enjoyed his presence during, and especially since, these meetings. Our own people have also got real good from the meetings. Several of our young friends have been brought out to decide for God.

* * * * * * *

"I must now say something about Leswick. Brother M'Kenzie and I landed there on Sabbath, and left again on the Wednesday week following. We were engaged every day and night

during that time beseeching men to be reconciled to God. We attended a prayer-meeting every morning at eight o'clock, when one or other of us addressed either parents or children, God's people or the awakened. We went to the streets at six o'clock every evening, and preached to crowds of sinners there. We had a stall each,—one at the Market-place, contiguous to Mr. Reid's house; one at Post-office; one at Leog; one at Docks, which brother Nicholson occupied. We spent just one hour in the streets; and then retired to the chapel at seven o'clock, inviting and generally taking with us the street-audiences. You might have seen us walking, each followed all along the streets by our respective audiences, up to the chapel. There we each preached once; and then invited the awakened to remain, in order to address them. From first to last, there could not have been fewer than two hundred who remained. On the second Sabbath evening of our sojourn, the Infant-school, to which the awakened were requested to retire, was filled to the door. That Sabbath was a high day in Leswick. The Barrack-parade in the Fort Charlotte was asked, and kindly granted, for the occasion. We had three services there during the day. Brother Brown preached an introductory sermon and dispensed the Lord's Supper in the forenoon. M'Kenzie and I preached both in the afternoon

and evening. It was computed that there were about a thousand people present in the evening. The whole services during the day were impressive. The Lord was with us. Brother Brown is settled under exceedingly auspicious circumstances. He has a praying, working church. We could scarcely get away from the Leswegians. One of the brethren actually prayed that the steamboat might not come [to fetch us away]. Brother Brown, writing to me since I came home, says that every day of the week after we left him he was engaged from morning to night conversing with those awakened about their souls. I hope the Lord will give him strength, knowledge, wisdom, and grace to carry on the work begun."

While writing the above letter, he little thought how near those circumstances were which should fan into a flame the fire of missionary zeal long ago deposited within his bosom, and which were destined, too, to issue in the termination of his brief pastorate at Kirkwall, and his entrance upon that foreign sphere of labour, from cultivating which he was early called to his rest.

CHAPTER V.

OFFER OF SERVICE TO THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY—RESIGNATION OF THE PASTORAL CHARGE AT KIRKWALL — VOYAGE TO SYDNEY.

On the 16th of August 1840, two days after Mr. M'Kean had penned the letter with which the last chapter concluded, he received a communication from Mr. Robertson of Thurso, intimating that the Rev. Micaiah Hill, one of the Deputation from the London Missionary Society in Scotland, would come over to Orkney, provided there was a probability of his obtaining some aid for the institution which he represented. A favourable answer was returned, and accordingly Mr. Hill proceeded to Kirkwall. Brief as was the intercourse between this excellent missionary and the subject of this memoir, it was sufficient to quicken into activity and power Mr. M'Kean's already cherished impressions in relation to the claims of the heathen upon the personal devotedness of the Christian church at home, and at the same time to produce, with a greater force than ever, a longing desire in his own soul

to give himself to the work. One circumstance had occurred in his history which left him more at liberty than he had previously been to entertain this purpose—his mother had entered into her rest. But the removal of this tie appeared at first sight to be counterbalanced by the formation of another, which might indeed have deterred him from again approaching the subject of missions with the intention of himself taking an active part in foreign labours. During his sojourn in Elgin, in the summer of 1836, a reciprocal attachment had sprung up between him and one who was in every way worthy of his Christian confidence and cordial affection, a member of the church under the pastoral care of the Rev. N. M'Neil; and in the spring of 1840 an union was formed, which was the source of as much joy to the church at Kirkwall as of holy satisfaction to each other; and the dissolution of which has early left the object of his affectionate regard a widow, with the strongest claims on the sympathy of all who love the cause of Christ, and who honour the men who, in undertaking the spread of his kingdom, count not their lives dear unto them. His Christian friends hailed this circumstance as holding out to them something like a pledge of his protracted stay among them. They desired this, for they esteemed him very highly in love for his works' sake. Scarcely had this alliance subsisted for six months, when the

question, which it seemed to his friends to have been entirely set at rest, came before his mind with an irresistible power. Before, however, venturing to entertain it, he consulted the feelings of the wife of his bosom, who was enabled by divine grace to meet his statement of all that was passing within his heart with her own most cordial acquiescence. Relieved thus on a point upon which, as a Christian husband, he felt that much, under God, must depend in relation to his future course, he gave himself to the prayerful consideration of his duty, and soon after was brought to the resolution to offer himself to the Board of Directors of the London Missionary Society. His friend Mr. Hill had counted upon no such result as this when he consented to plead the cause of missions in Kirkwall. He had asked for pecuniary aid, but God had given him a contribution of a far more precious order, for "he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think." The hearts of all are in his hand, and he does "make his people willing in the day of his power." Mr. Hill, perceiving the advantage which he had gained over Mr. M'Kean's mind during his intercourse, had not failed to follow up that advantage with earnest appeals and affectionate entreaties. On leaving Kirkwall he wrote a note, the contents of which, as we read them now, appear to border upon the prophetic.

"My dear Brother,

* * * * * * *

* * I shall long remember Kirkwall; for although it was a hasty and busy visit, it was a happy one; and one consideration which increases the pleasure of my recollection is, that of having made yours and Mrs. M'Kean's acquaintance, to be renewed, if not in India, I trust in heaven.

"Let me, my dear brother, intreat you to give the subject of missions your careful re-consideration, with prayer for divine guidance.

"Few, very few indeed, are to be found whose apparent path of duty (in my judgment) has been more clearly defined by divine providence than yours. Your aged venerable mother in heaven wants not your protection. Your wife is cheerfully ready to accompany you on an embassy of mercy to the far-distant heathen. Your usefulness in your present sphere, instead of being an objection, is an argument in favour of your going to the heathen. We do not want men whose talents will not support them in England, and who fly to missionary work as to a retreat from difficulties at home. Such men make no sacrifices; they are gainers by the exchange of pastoral for missionary duties. We want men who can oppose Satan abroad, and are qualified to meet him in the regions of darkness

and superstition; and the best test of their ability to do so is their having successfully met him in this our own land. But enough. My kind Christian regards to Mrs. M'Kean. Tell her I shall be proud to meet her and her dear husband, when they receive a congratulatory and farewell address from our Directors on their embarkation for the missionary field—the arena of conflict with the powers of darkness, but the field of triumph to the faithful missionary, even should it be converted into a martyr's grave.

"The proudest honours I could covet, would be to have inscribed by the hand of Jehovah on my grave 'Here lieth * * * * * my faithful martyr.'

"Your affectionate brother,

"M. HILL."

"*Aberdeen, Sept.* 21*st*, 1840."

And ere four short years had elapsed, the brother whom he thus sought to excite and encourage had found a grave on the missionary field, if not as a witness for the truth, yet as a martyr to his affection for those to whom he preached it, and to the energy and firmness of his effort, amid scenes of oppression and conflict, to secure to the depressed and scattered people of his charge the continuance of former religious privileges, the enjoyment of

which the hand of injustice and cruelty had interrupted. But we must not anticipate.

The surprise and disappointment of the church at Kirkwall were great, when he made known to them his determination. Tears and entreaties were employed to divert him from his intentions, but in vain. He met these pleadings, which by other means it would have been hard to resist, by an appeal to principle. He spoke to them much of the duty of self-denial in the cause of Christ; he urged the responsibility of churches as well as of individuals to practise it, and stated his conviction that the Head of the church was now calling upon them to give up their pastor, and that, although their affection for him might make the sacrifice painful, the claims of the heathen were so urgent as to render such sacrifices, on the part of themselves and of other churches, necessary and imperative.

His offer of service was at once responded to by the Directors of the London Missionary Society. In his replies to the usual queries proposed to those who express the desire to be consecrated to the missionary work, he writes, "The desire of becoming a missionary has been entertained for years, but circumstances prevented the carrying it out. The truth which taught me to love the Saviour, also taught me to love his cause, and consequently

to seek its extension. As my knowledge and experience of God's love has increased, my desire to tell of that love, I trust, has increased also. The subject has always been a matter engaging a portion of my daily intercourse with God, and more specially so since my mind has been decided on offering myself for the missionary work. I am daily taught not to be too confident in the entire purity of motives issuing from a heart still retaining in some measure the characteristic feature 'deceitful;' yet I can say, before God, that my growing desire is 'to spend and be spent in his service,' 'to know nothing among men but Jesus Christ, and him crucified,' that, whether at home or abroad, whether my time for labour be long or short, I may spend a holy, devoted, and useful life in the service of the gospel."

At the request of the Board, he travelled to London, for the sake of a personal interview with them. It was winter, and no direct conveyance from Orkney was to be procured. He set out in a small vessel which did not prove very sea-worthy, and which encountering a very severe gale, after much difficulty and danger, put in at Burnt Island. Thence he proceeded by land, and arrived safely in London at the time appointed for meeting the Directors. The result of this visit was that his services were accepted. The West Indies were

selected as the sphere of his labours; and the charge which it was especially intended to confide to him was that of training up native young men for the important duties of the pastoral office.

His first inclination would have led him to India. This was not to be wondered at, his friend Mr. Hill having laboured there, and having undoubtedly employed the state of India as his argument in those efforts which he successfully made to induce Mr. M'Kean to give himself to the work. But he left the question of his destination, under God, entirely to the Directors.

He returned home, and lost no time in communicating the change in his prospects to his relatives. In announcing this to his mother-in-law, he writes, "It is a high honour, my dear mother, to labour for God in any portion of his vineyard, but especially is it so to labour for him among the heathen, and next to the honour and happiness of labouring ourselves is that of giving up sons and daughters to the work of the Lord. I do trust and pray that you will see the matter in this light, and be rejoiced to give up Jane 'to the help of the Lord against the mighty.' We hope to see you in the spring, and to find you in the enjoyment of restored health and full possession of God's favour. Until then we shall pray for you, and our other dear friends with you, that we all with one mind and one

heart may rejoice in giving ourselves and one another to the work of the Lord, whether at home or abroad."

Circumstances subsequently occurred which led to an alteration in the intention of the Board. His change of destination was communicated to him in the following letter from the Foreign Secretary.

"*London, March* 13*th,* 1841.

"MY DEAR SIR,—The Directors of the London Missionary Society, after much serious and prayerful deliberation, have been inclined to appoint as your future field of labour the Island of Tahiti, in the South Pacific Ocean. You are aware that this was the first scene of the Society's labours, and that here also were accomplished, through the grace of the Divine Spirit, some of its earliest and brightest achievements. Since those days of first love, I regret to say a sad declension has followed on the part of some, and a state of things now exists that requires the exercise of that sound discretion and holy firmness which are the result of ministerial experience. The Directors have therefore appointed yourself, in company with the Rev. J. T. Jesson, of Theddingworth, in Leicestershire, to this important sphere; and they are anxious to obtain the services of one or two other brethren of some standing in the ministry at home for the same

service. Mr. Jesson was formerly designed for the Catholic priesthood, and is, we trust, well qualified to frustrate the designs of the Jesuit missionaries, who are seeking to sow tares among the wheat in the South Pacific Islands.

"You will find it desirable to proceed to London when you have made your final settlement of affairs in Scotland. A month or more will be necessary to prepare for your long voyage; and on your arrival in town, you had better come to this house, where you will receive the necessary directions as to a place of sojourn, &c. Trusting, my dear Sir, that the blessed results of this appointment may afford evidence that in making it the minds of the Directors have been guided by 'the wisdom that cometh from above,'

"I am, yours very cordially,

"A. TIDMAN."

"P. S.—You will probably sail for Sydney about the beginning of May."

The time was now very near when he must separate himself from that flock which he tenderly loved, and to whom the Master whom he served had rendered him so great a blessing. As the period of his departure approached, he felt a shrinking from the necessity of saying "Farewell," which was exceedingly painful to his sensitive mind. At

length his last Sabbath at Kirkwall arrived. He entered the pulpit, but was evidently much distressed and agitated. With a trembling voice he gave out a few verses, and afterwards endeavoured to read a part of the 69th Psalm: "Save me, O God; for the waters have come in unto my soul." He was so overpowered by his feelings that it was impossible for him to proceed. A brother-minister present engaged in prayer. Having gained some small degree of composure from this exercise, he addressed the church and congregation; but his emotions hardly allowed him to express to them all that he had intended. The assembly shared in all that he felt, and nothing was heard but sighs and weeping. On a subsequent evening, he met them once more, when some pleasing tokens of their affection to himself and Mrs. M'Kean were presented. The address which accompanied this presentation is a decisive testimony to the holiness and usefulness of his pastoral life, and to the esteem and affection in which he was held by the people of his charge.

"*To the Rev. T. S. M'Kean, A.M., Pastor of the Congregational Church at Kirkwall.*

"DEARLY-BELOVED AND MUCH-RESPECTED PASTOR,—The prospect of being so soon called upon to part with you, in all probability to see your face no

more in the flesh, fills us with deep sorrow and regret; yet at the same time we rejoice that nothing has occurred, during the time you have had the pastoral charge over us, to interrupt the exercise of Christian love and esteem, but that these feelings have daily increased during your stay among us.

"We trust that this dispensation, which is so painful to us at present, will prove one of those 'all things,' which will 'work together for our good' and the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom.

"We shall ever entertain a deep sense of the faithfulness and zeal with which, through divine assistance, you have been enabled to exercise the duties of the pastoral office amongst us,—how you have been 'instant in season, and out of season,' both in feeding God's people and warning sinners of their danger; and we trust, in addition to fruits which you have already received of your labours, others may appear many days hence.

"In particular do we feel, that you, in your private life and conversation, have been a living 'example to your flock' of those doctrines which you have declared to them in public. The great interest which you have ever manifested for the eternal welfare of the young among us, and the instructions which you and your esteemed partner have imparted to them, fill our hearts with gratitude to you, as also to our heavenly Father for

sending you among us, and we feel we lose much indeed in losing you. Yet, if your departure to another field of labour, and that field one in which the interests of Christ's kingdom are so deeply concerned, will tend more to the promotion of God's glory, we would desire cheerfully to submit, knowing that no sacrifice can be too great for him who laid down his life for us.

"We would plead earnestly, at the same time, that the Lord would pour out on you a double portion of his Holy Spirit, to fit you yet more fully for the important work to which we believe he has called you, that you may be made the honoured instrument in his hand in bringing many among the heathen to bow to the sceptre of Messiah, who shall be to yourself 'a crown of joy, and rejoicing in the great day.'

"Let us have an interest daily in your prayers at the throne of grace; and we trust we shall remember you not only in private, but also in our social capacity, as the pastor by whom our souls have been so often refreshed.

"We as a church would beg your and Mrs. M'Kean's acceptance of the accompanying marks of our heartfelt gratitude and affection. Pleading that our heavenly Father would conduct you in safety to your future destination, we would now commend you and your dear partner to

'the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.'

"We are, beloved Pastor, in the name and by the appointment of the church,

"Yours in the bonds of the gospel,

(Signed) "GEORGE ROBERTSON.
"HUGH WOOD.
"WILLIAM CREAR." } *Deacons.*

"*Kirkwall, 23rd March,* 1841."

Nor were these expressions of affectionate regret confined to the church. The dear children of the schools mourned over his removal; and the touching notes which he received from some of his Bible Class, and which he felt a pleasure in preserving till his dying day, conveyed, in language simple but sincere, their love to him as a father, and their reverence for him as a pastor and teacher.

A day or two afterwards, he and his beloved companion in life took their departure from Kirkwall, leaving Orkney in an open boat, and in this exposed manner crossed the Pentland Firth, —a passage not unattended with danger at that season of the year, the month of March. Thus terminated his pastorate at Kirkwall. It was undoubtedly far more brief in its duration than

was intended or contemplated by him when he accepted it; but, brief as it was, it was replete with advantage to many souls, and rich in blessing to his own. When reviewing it in a far-distant land, he would often say, "I never spent such a time of mental anxiety as I did in the first of my pastorate there, when my soul was crushed to the earth with the weight of a dead church; but I never had a more profitable time to my own soul, for this very circumstance led me more to a throne of grace, and to wrestling in prayer and strenuous exertions to arouse them. And these means were blessed; and now there is no time of my life which I can look back upon with more pleasure than I can upon those days."

They proceeded to Elgin, to bid adieu to dear Christian friends and relatives there. A day or two was spent in Thurso, where it had been his privilege some time before to take part in meetings held for the revival of religion. God had been pleased to render his preaching on that occasion instrumental in the awakening of several young people; and his farewell visit gave rise to much deep emotion on their part, as well as in his own bosom. A meeting was held in the chapel, at which the solemn pledge was given him by his Christian brethren that they would not cease to bear him on their hearts at the throne of grace,—an engagement

which, far from being forgotten, was still being put into practice when the intelligence reached the church of the sudden stroke, by which the special object of these prayers was called from his trials to his rest. His next visit was to his near relatives in Wigton. The affection of some of these would have persuaded him even now to relinquish the enterprise to which he had committed himself, but he met every plea with firmness. When it was urged that the separation would probably be a final one between him and those who loved him tenderly, he directed their minds to heaven, and to the hope of meeting there. When it was stated that he might possibly lose his life among the heathen, as others before him had lost theirs, he admitted the possibility, but spoke of the glorious cause for which in such a case he would suffer. When it was argued that he could be useful at home, he replied that where he was going the fields were not only "white to the harvest," but "the labourers were few." Until at length, like the Apostle when he asked—"What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart?" he begged that, for his own comfort's sake, they would desist. It was especially a trial to him to part with his sister. On the morning of the last day he spent with her, he entreated that she would restrain her feelings, expressing the pang which it cost him to leave her. "I said I would," she

writes, in recording this his final visit; "and I kept my spirits up as well as I could, that I might not grieve him; for oh! how I loved him from his youth!"

"The Sabbath after his departure," says a friend, "was a gloomy Sabbath, perhaps as much so as ever the poor Independents of Kirkwall spent. I could almost suppose that the very chapel itself was sensible of the loss it had sustained." The attached members of his flock, anxious as long as possible to hold intercourse with him, availed themselves of the opportunity of communicating with him by letter. "How, my more than brother," is the expression of one of them, "shall I convey to you my sense of the deep interest you have manifested in my spiritual welfare during the period you have been among us; words are wholly inadequate, but my heart feels it deeply. You have been a second spiritual father to me. I tremble when I look back upon the years of death-like coldness into which I had fallen, until I was enabled to open my soul to you. Oh the long-suffering patience of my heavenly Father! I have often since that time departed from him; but he has again and again, in his abounding mercy, made you the instrument in his hands of restoring my soul. Is it matter of wonder, then, that my heart should be bound to you by stronger than

natural ties? You have indeed been my faithful counsellor and reprover; and I think I can say, 'Though the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness and a precious oil, which shall not hurt my head.' You have also been the means of imparting to my mind clearer and more enlarged views of the truths of the gospel, as well as of the necessity of a life and conversation conformed to its blessed precepts. Do pray that your instructions, now that I can no longer enjoy them, may bring forth fruit to the praise and glory of God. On the other hand, what cause of deep humility in the sight of God have I, when I consider how often I have abused privileges so precious, and how little fruit they have as yet produced! Well may I exclaim, that shame and confusion of face belong to me in this respect. What need of atoning blood! While my heart bleeds, I think I can bless God who sent you here, and trust through grace to bless God through eternity for it.

"Plead with me, my dear pastor, that the Lord would show me what ends he has in view with *me individually* in this trying dispensation. I feel he is calling upon me loudly to draw closely to himself, and draw my supplies more immediately from the fountain-head. He is also teaching me, in plain language, that he will have no idols to usurp his place in my heart, not even from among his own

dear servants. Has not the Lord also had a controversy with me, on account of the misimprovement of the precious privileges I have enjoyed both in private interview with you, as well as under your public ministrations. My heavenly Father can make this bitter cup sweet, if he but sanctify it to my soul, so that I may be led to 'hear the rod, and him who hath appointed it.'

"I am sure it would console you to hear your poor people here, while they lament their loss, bless God, with overflowing eyes and hearts, for the comfort they have enjoyed under your ministry. I know you had abundant cause to lament over our coldness as a church; but remember what we were when you came among us. Many among our small number have been taught to pray as they never prayed before; nor have you been without seeing the fruit of your labours in the conversion of sinners: so the Lord has not allowed you to spend your strength altogether in vain among us.

"We have also reason to believe that the Lord had still more important ends in view, in appointing your lot for a season among us to labour under many and great discouragements; that by thus trying your faith and patience, he has been fitting you for a yet more arduous undertaking. We do earnestly plead that you may be made an honoured instrument in his hand for the promotion of the

Redeemer's kingdom in lands of heathen darkness—that you may be made wise to win many souls, so that you yourself may at last 'shine as a star' of the first magnitude 'in the firmament' above. In such a view of the subject, dare we repine at losing you? Oh, no! Let us rather rejoice that the Lord has honoured us to give up a beloved pastor for such a work.

"Plead for us, that as a church God may bless this dispensation to us; that now, when you are removed, we may not get more cold and lifeless, but be enabled to renew our diligence; and in pleading that your lack of service may be supplied to us, we may keep God's glory in view as our only aim. * * * * * *

I do tenderly sympathize with dear Mrs. M'Kean in the trial before her; but I trust she will find the Lord 'a very present help in the time of trouble'—that 'as her day is,' so will she find her 'strength' to be; and that she will experience the fulfilment of that gracious promise, 'Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel's, shall receive a hundred fold more in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting.' I need not ask you to remember me where I most require to be remembered. I know I have an interest in your prayers. May our hea-

venly Father cause all grace and peace to abound to you."

In the month of May, Mr. and Mrs. M'Kean left Scotland by the "North Star" steamer, and, after a calm and easy passage, arrived safely in London. Here they had the gratification of meeting again their friend Mr. Hill, to whose ardent missionary zeal their present position and prospects were, under the guidance of God, to be mainly attributed. The circumstances under which they were proceeding to the South Seas awakened much interest on their behalf in the hearts of many Christian friends, whose acquaintance they already possessed, or to whom they were now introduced. On the Monday following their arrival in London, they met the Directors at the Mission House, and, in company with Mr. and Mrs. Jesson, received an appropriate and affectionate address from the Rev. J. J. Freeman in the name of the Board. Several succeeding days were necessarily and completely occupied in making arrangements preparatory to the voyage, during which they took up their abode with a dear friend residing in Essex-street, Strand. They were days of extreme bodily fatigue and mental anxiety. On the evening of Tuesday, June 8th, a service was held at the Rev. Thomas Binney's Chapel, for the purpose of publicly designating to the missionary work Mr. M'Kean and

Mr. Budden (appointed to Benares), in which engagement the Revs. Dr. Vaughan, T. Binney, W. P. Lyon, E. Mannering, and J. Arundel took part.

During his stay in the metropolis, he was engaged in public every Sabbath. The last sermon which he preached in London was delivered on Sunday evening, June 13th, in New Court Chapel. His text was Psalm xxxiv. 14, "Seek peace and pursue it." It was a warm, affectionate, and impressive discourse.

In the afternoon, he had addressed the Sunday-school of the same chapel, and had given a proof of the deep interest which he took in the welfare of the souls of children. Having noticed one of the scholars much affected by the address, he went to her after the service, sat down by her side, and earnestly and affectionately directed her to seek the things which make for peace. On the same day, he accompanied the friend with whom he was staying, in his walks of usefulness among the poor and sick in the neighbourhood of the chapel. They visited one poor woman whose state of mind in reference to another world was very unsatisfactory. His companion set before her mildly, and in a few words, the truth as it is in Jesus, and then requested Mr. M'Kean to address her. He complied; but his manner was so decided, and the appeals which he made to her heart and

conscience were so pungent, that his friend trembled lest she should take offence. On leaving the house, he ventured to say, "Why, Mr. M'Kean, did you speak to her thus? For my part, I should fear, if I had spoken to her in that way, that she would shut the door against me, and never see me again." "Ah!" he rejoined, "that last was the very point; I knew she never would see me again, and therefore I addressed her as I did."

On the 16th of June, they left London to go on board the "Cairo," bound for Sydney. Before starting, Mr. M'Kean penned a hasty note, but full of Christian spirit and zeal, to his sister-in-law at Elgin.

"My dear Sister Ann,—Jane has told you all that is important. I thank you for your kind letter. Keep Tahiti on your heart, and before the throne of grace, and the Lord will open your way. We now commend ourselves and our interests to your fervent prayers. We shall continue to pray for you. Remember me in kindest love to mother, father, and Alexander. Tell your father, from me, that for Jane and myself I specially request an interest in his daily prayers. Continue to pray for A——. The Lord has an open ear and a strong arm. In regard to the past, we say, What has He wrought? The Lord Jesus

is precious to our hearts now. We go forth not knowing what may befall us; yet in the Lord is our strength. He is our Rock and Fortress. Here we have peace. May God, in his mercy, ever, in all circumstances, lead us to the Rock that is higher than we are. Kind love to Mr. and Mrs. M'Neil. We shall endeavour to have letters ready on the voyage, so that a sail coming in sight homeward-bound may not approach us unprepared. God bless you, and keep you, and make you a blessing.

"Ever your affectionate brother,

"THOMAS."

On going on board the vessel, it was discovered that it would not sail for two or three days. This was felt to be disappointing, and it was at first proposed that they should return to London; but they decided to remain where they were, and wisely too, since to have returned would have involved the necessity of again encountering the pain of saying "Farewell" to the numerous friends from whom they had separated. The Sabbath morning found them still off Gravesend. As it was certain that they would not sail till night, or Monday morning, they resolved to go on shore and attend public worship. They sought out the sanctuary in which the Rev. J. Tippetts has long

laboured in word and doctrine, and, after the service, Mr. M'Kean introduced himself as a missionary proceeding to Tahiti. He was pressed by Mr. Tippetts to preach, and consented to do so, feeling that it was a privilege to have another opportunity of speaking for Christ before leaving his native shores. Immediately after the close of the service, they returned to the vessel, accompanied by one of the members of the church, who had most hospitably entertained them during the day. On Monday morning, at two o'clock, the anchor was taken up, and their voyage commenced.

The entries in his diary during the voyage manifest that deep and earnest spirituality of mind, which it was ever his desire to maintain as well for its own sake as on account of the intimate connection which exists between such a state and a Christian's power to glorify God in the view of those around him. He had scarcely sailed when he wrote, "It will require considerable grace to preserve the soul's health in this ship. Though the company is select, it is worldly, and consequently retarding to the soul." Again, "It requires close living to God to keep the soul alive here. All is of the world, with few exceptions." "How wisely and circumspectly we ought to walk here! May the God of all grace give us grace

so to walk as to commend the gospel which we profess, and of which we are the professed teachers." "Monday, July 5th. Yesterday prayers were read by brother Jesson. The professed followers of Christ met afterwards in Captain G——'s cabin, when we celebrated the Lord's Supper. I presided in breaking bread to the disciples. I hope it was a profitable, as well as a delightful season. Endeavoured to press home the necessity of *living* the gospel while on board. The world vastly predominates here. How necessary to live near to God!"

At the same time there is discovered in the tone of his remarks that cheerful sense of the goodness of God, and of grateful confidence in him, which was another feature of his personal religion. After mentioning the manner in which both Mrs. M'Kean and himself suffered at the commencement of the voyage, he adds, "Yet *God is good.* How blessed and consoling it is to fall back in all our trials on the Lord!" "We are expecting to reach Teneriffe in seven days, if the breeze continues. *God is good.* How wonderfully have we experienced the truth of this since we commenced our voyage!" "We saw two sails yesterday—the first for some days. How strange, how awful the solitude of the ocean! God has indeed been favourable to us hitherto."

On the 26th of October, they anchored safely

in Sydney Roads; but ere they came in sight of land, an event had occurred, always full of interest, but specially so in the estimation of those who love the Lord, and who look upon all they have and are as consecrated to his service,—they were called to rejoice over the birth of their first child. It had been fondly hoped that their destination would have been reached before the hour of danger and difficulty arrived; but their heavenly Father was pleased to order otherwise. Very closely did the anxious husband watch the progress of the ship, and very often were the sailors induced by him to ascertain how many knots it was making an hour. Some of the passengers used to say, in cheerful mood, that before the dear child was born, and while there was any hope of reaching Sydney in time to escape the inconvenience of such an occurrence on shipboard, they could almost tell from Mr. M'Kean's face whether the vessel had made any considerable advance during the last twenty-four hours; but that after the birth of the child he turned philosopher all at once, and seemed quite regardless how long they might be in getting on land. From Sydney he wrote to his relatives in Garlieston.

"My dear Friends,—By the good hand of our God upon us, we arrived safely here on the 26th of

October, after a favourable voyage of four months and five days. Our voyage was one in which mercies abounded, to the almost entire exclusion of alarms. You will unite with us in offering to God thanksgiving and praise for his abounding loving-kindness. In consequence of Mrs. M'Kean's precarious circumstances, we experienced considerable anxiety of mind during the first part of the voyage; but being enabled to commit ourselves with confidence to our God, we were supported. How truly did we realize the preciousness of the Scripture, 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose heart is stayed on thee!' In all our troubles, 'the angel of his presence saved us.' It is good to trust in the Lord, and patiently to wait on him. About ten days before reaching our destination, Mrs. M'Kean was delivered of a son. This took place on Sabbath morning, about half-past ten, ship's time; about half-past one, A.M., your time; in longitude 136 E., latitude 39 S., just on our approaching the coast of New Holland. Something remarkable, besides its being the Sabbath, was, that it was also the birthday of my dear wife, October 17th. * * * *

We got Mrs. M'Kean out of the ship the day after our arrival. Dr. Ross, the agent of the Missionary Society here, got a carriage ready, in which she was conveyed to lodgings which I had previously

provided. She stood the removal well, and is now almost as strong as ever. We have called the little boy Francis Gordon, after his maternal grandfather. He is doing well. We had the happiness and privilege two Sabbaths ago of publicly dedicating him to God in baptism. Our daily prayer is, that the Lord may 'separate him from the womb' to his service and glory.

"This is a very large place, and in some measure, from its original character of a penal colony, a very wicked place. 'The salt of the earth' is here also. There are some very devoted Christians in Dr. Ross's church. Upon the whole, however, I would say that vital godliness is very low throughout this colony. I have been engaged preaching since I came here. I am to preach to-morrow and the following Sabbath. * * *

We are likely to remain here for two or three months, waiting for the return of the missionary ship 'Camden.' If good men were to come out here, and remain satisfied with a reasonable acquisition of this world's goods, the moral character of this rapidly-growing colony would soon undergo a salutary change. But the evil is, that money being so easily acquired, all are carried away by its love and worship. * * * *

Give my kind love to all inquiring friends. Take this letter, with my love, to Mr. and Mrs. Y——,

Mr. and Mrs. M——. Send it also, with my love, to Mr. P——, Wigton. May the peace of God rest and remain on your souls.

"Your affectionate brother,

"T. S. M'KEAN."

CHAPTER VI.

ARRIVAL AT TAHITI—MISSIONARY OCCUPATION.

THE delay at Sydney afforded the opportunity of enjoying intercourse with several Christian friends of various denominations. Mr. M'Kean possessed, in an eminent degree, the happy power of making friends; his openness of heart and his affectionateness of spirit quickly attracted strangers to him. One proof of regard, which he received while staying at Sydney, was not a little singular. While passing up a street, a boy accosted him, and inquired if his name was M'Kean; he of course replied in the affirmative. The boy immediately put into his hands a small parcel, and walked off. Upon opening it, he found that it contained a very handsome silver snuff-box, with the inscription on its lid, "To the Rev. Thomas M'Kean;" but no intelligence of its donor or donors was ever afforded him.

They sailed from Sydney on the 3rd of January, 1842, and, after a slow but safe voyage, they

landed at Tahiti on the 15th of February. They were received at Papeete by the Brethren Thompson and Stallworthy, who had recently left the Marquesas, and were anxiously looking for communications from the Directors as to their future movements. When they came on shore, they were kindly entertained by Mrs. Pritchard, the wife of the British Consul, who was at the time absent in England. On the following day, they had the pleasure of meeting a missionary brother, Mr. Howe, between whom and the subject of this memoir a friendship commenced then, which continued to be the source of pleasure and comfort to both until death divided them.

"On hearing of his arrival," says Mr. Howe, in a letter addressed to the writer of this memoir, "I went over from Eimeo to Tahiti, to welcome him as a brother-labourer. I was immediately interested in his favour. His open, cheerful countenance, with his frank mode of expression, at once gained upon my affections, and led me to feel fully confident that I should find in him *a companion in labour*. My next interview with him was at my own house at Eimeo, a few days after, at a meeting of the missionaries, where my first impressions respecting him were fully confirmed. The judgment he displayed in giving his opinion on topics under discussion, the ardent sympathy he evinced

with all the affairs of the mission, and the deep-toned piety of his prayers, gave our entire body a very favourable view of his character as a missionary and a brother."

His future station was naturally the first object of attraction to Mr. M'Kean, and he lost no time in visiting it. Haapape or Matavai, situated at no very considerable distance from Papeete, had been under the charge of Mr. Wilson, who had long borne the burden and heat of the day, and who now retired from the active duties of his office. Mr. Wilson received him, and proceeded to inform the members of the church that a new teacher had come out for them. They agreed to come to Papeete, and to convey the luggage to Haapape. This they accordingly did; while the newly-arrived missionary and his wife followed in canoes, and took up their abode with Mr. and Mrs. Wilson until a suitable house could be provided for themselves. A few days after, about twenty of the church-members came, one after another, carrying a present as a token of welcome. The present consisted of bread-fruit, cocoa-nuts, bananas, oranges, sweet potatoes, taro, fowls, and fish. These they placed on the ground in front of the house. One of their number made a brief speech, stating the reason of the present; to which Mr. and Mrs. M'Kean replied, Mr. Wilson acting

as interpreter. For some time afterwards, their temporary abode was quite a point of attraction to the natives, and visitors arrived in quick succession to see the new comers. The freedom of manners which they displayed was strangely at variance with European notions of propriety, and required the exercise of some degree of forbearance on the part of the strangers. They would come and watch them eat, standing gazing at the windows, or arranging themselves along the sides of the room. They used the same freedom with the sleeping apartment as with the dining-room, until at length the novelty wore off gradually, and the lookers-on, having satisfied their curiosity to the full, ceased to intrude. No time was lost in constructing a house for their future occupancy, and the acquisition of the language of course became now the primary object with Mr. M'Kean. A letter addressed to his sister-in-law affords his first impression of the scene of his labours.

"*Matavai, Tahiti, 23rd March*, 1842.

"My dear Sister Ann,—When this reaches you, you will unite with us, the spared monuments of our heavenly Father's mercy, in blessing God with all our soul for his loving-kindness and tender mercies. Since we have parted from you, we have gone round the one-half of the world,

passing right under your feet, and are now settled about 3,000 miles nearer to you than your antipodes. We can scarcely realize the idea that we have passed over such an immense portion of the surface of the earth with such abounding mercies and so few alarms. Yet it is the fact. Father, mother, and child are now, through the mercy of God, at the place from which I date this, in the enjoyment of health and peace.

"Our passage from Sydney was rather tedious, but safe, and upon the whole pleasant. We left Sydney on the 3rd of January, and landed upon Tahiti on the 15th of February, making a voyage of six weeks. After a stay of eight days at Papeete, the place where we landed, where we received much kindness from Mrs. Pritchard, we proceeded to our station, a distance of eight miles. Our station is interesting, from the circumstance of its being the first missionary station in Tahiti, while the island itself is the first missionary station in this part of the world. Not many yards from where we reside at present is the site of the first British house, erected by the first missionaries landed by the ship 'Duff,' Captain Wilson. There was another house built afterwards, which was destroyed during the first war when the missionaries fled to Eimeo (*vide* Ellis's 'Polynesian Researches'). The orange-trees planted by the mis-

sionaries are all that mark its site. On this spot I intend having my house built. The spot is about 400 yards from Point Venus, where Captain Cook pitched his tent to watch the transit of the planet of that name. The sun is here (within the tropics) necessarily very hot; yet, from the shade of the abounding trees and shrubs, and the cooling sea-breezes, we have no such feeling of scorching heat as we experienced in Sydney. This land abounds with food for man and beast; it presents almost an exception to the universal doom pronounced against man as a consequence of sin. 'In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread;' for here, though they neither till the ground nor sow, they have an abundance of food, of all kinds and quality, for the trouble of gathering it. From this, together with the high temperature of the climate, have resulted habits of indolence; and it is well known how congenial such habits are with sin.

"The natives here are wonderfully forward in some things, and yet scarcely a step removed from barbarism in others. For example, they have not had a complete copy of the word of God for more than four years; and yet their knowledge of its contents would put thousands of professors to the blush in our own land. They are naturally intelligent, acute, and very curious;

and hence resulted some remarkable instances of application when the complete Bible was first put into their hands. A deacon of the church, I am told, the first month that he had the Bible in his possession, had read the Old Testament portion over four times. They are exceedingly fond of reading the Scriptures. They meet generally every morning at sunrise in the chapel for this purpose, with the missionary in the midst of them, guiding their reading and answering their questions. They are exceedingly fond of the figurative and metaphorical portions of it; hence the song of Solomon is quite a favourite with them. Their ingenuity and acuteness are remarkably evinced by the questions which they are continually presenting to the missionary. * * * And yet, notwithstanding the advancement in general knowledge of the Scriptures, in some things they have scarcely made a transition from their old habits and manners. It is hard to change the habits of a nation.

"Very generally, they live in the same kind of houses as they formerly did; and though the material of their clothing is now usually British, yet the quantity of covering for the body is not very generally increased. You see them yet as they did fifty years ago, I suppose, squatting down on the ground in groups of from ten to twenty,

old and young, male and female, promiscuously sending round from mouth to mouth a piece of tobacco rolled up in paper in the form of a cigar, each taking not more than two or three inspirations, and forcing the smoke out again at mouth, nostrils, and ears. You may see the child of six years of age, after he has taken his mouthful, hand the cigar to his father or mother, or it may be to his grandfather or grandmother, according to proximity. They not only retain many of their old habits—none, however, involving moral turpitude—but, what is worse, they have greedily acquired some of the very worst of British ones. There has, too, a lamentable and wide-spread spirit of covetousness crept in among them, in consequence of learning the value of money from the resort of shipping. As the specie is in dollars and half-dollars, their demands for the most trifling piece of service are exorbitant. They never think of asking less than a quarter or half a dollar. The female portion of the population is still low; although many of them have been taught to sew, yet their inveterately indolent habits render almost useless this acquirement, and they cannot brook confinement to one locality.

"We want very much a proper and operative system of education for both females and males. They should be taught apart and respectively by

instructors of their own sex. Into these schools English education should be introduced. We want a revolution in the habits and associations of the population; and this must be done before these habits acquire strength through age. (You see we have a wide field for you, and such as you, in Tahiti.) Much must yet be effected upon the young before the population is civilized.

"I am almost without room to offer my kindest love to father, mother, and Alexander. And accept, my dear sister, my warmest affection for yourself. Remember me in the kindest manner to Mr. and Mrs. M'Neil. I shall expect letters from you and from them long ere this reaches you. Tell us everything; the most trifling piece of intelligence is valuable to us in this far-distant land. May the God of all grace bless, keep, and preserve you. I must conclude by subscribing myself,

"Your very affectionate brother,

"T. S. M'KEAN."

They had not long taken up their abode with Mr. Wilson before they received a visit from the Queen (Pomare), who has since been called to pass through affliction and sorrow so deep and distressing as to demand for her the fullest sympathy and most fervent prayers of the Christian church; and to whom it is but a bare act of justice to affirm that

the manner in which she has met the varied forms of injustice, insult, and oppression which she has been compelled to encounter has been such as to entitle her to sincere respect, whether she be regarded as a woman, a queen, or a Christian professor. Her interviews with the missionary families were extremely friendly in their character, and conducted in homely style. Soon after, they were visited by the Queen's aunt and her husband, the Governor of Matavai; and not long afterwards by Tapoa, the King of Borabora, to whom they also had the pleasure of listening as he prayed publicly, and next gave an address to the church. Their abode was contiguous to the Queen's residence, and this circumstance afforded them many subsequent opportunities of intercourse with her.

One of the many mercies which greatly contributed to Mr. M'Kean's comfort on entering upon his new sphere, and which he regarded as a special blessing, for which the expressions of his gratitude were eminently due, was the cheerfulness with which his predecessor resigned into his hands the charge which he had long held, and from which, in kindness to himself, the Directors judged it best that he should now retire. It is always hard, except as divine grace renders it otherwise, to say of another, "he must increase, but I must decrease;" but in proportion to the known difficulty of acting

on this principle is the satisfaction with which the veteran labourer is seen gracefully retiring from the field on which, in the vigour of earlier days, he has bestowed his toil, and, in the spirit of meekness and without reluctance, giving place to one whose physical and mental energies render him more competent to its cultivation. Such instances have been witnessed at home,—would that they were more frequent in their occurrence! as, indeed, there is reason to believe they would be, if churches did but lay it to heart generously to prepare the way for the retirement of their aged pastors, by insuring to them some adequate provision during their few remaining days. And in regard to foreign labours, what Christian heart but must feel that a small portion of the funds of Missionary Societies might be most beneficially and legitimately employed for the purpose of affording the opportunity of withdrawment from the active duties of their office to dear and honoured brethren abroad, wearied not *of* but *in* their work? Mr. Wilson had served his Master many years; he felt himself unequal to all the claims of duty; he welcomed Mr. M'Kean, and, from the moment of his arrival, considered himself merely as a *locum tenens*, until his successor should be qualified to preach to the people.

The period which was spent by him in the ac-

quisition of the Tahitian language was necessarily a time in which his patience was called into considerable exercise. It had been his delight in his own land to publish the glad tidings of salvation to his fellow-men; he had preached every Sabbath of his stay in London; during the voyage, too, he had, alternately with Mr. Jesson, enjoyed the opportunity of declaring "the truth as it is in Jesus" to those in company with whom he sailed; not a single Sabbath had he been silent while in Sydney, and during the voyage thence to Tahiti the same privilege had been afforded him; and he now felt his inability to open his lips, for the instruction and edification of the objects of his compassion, to be a trial indeed. He was unceasing in his efforts to make himself master of the language, and at length, on the 16th of December, he was able to write to a friend, "I intend preaching my first regular sermon on Sabbath the 18th." He did so; at the same time requesting Miss Wilson, the daughter of his esteemed predecessor, to act as censor. He made very few mistakes, and these comparatively trifling. This was a great relief to his mind; he "thanked God, and took courage."

His correspondence with dear friends at home at this time exhibits a state of mind alive to the difficulties of his work, and yet deriving from the past goodness of God motives to the exercise of

confidence in him for the future. Nor did he forget to employ, for the benefit of others, the sweet experience which had been afforded him of the Lord's faithfulness and power. "My dear madam," says he to a friend, "I can exhort you, from increased experience, in the language of the Psalmist, 'Trust in the Lord at all times.' Put your confidence in him. 'Cast your burden upon the Lord, for he will never suffer the righteous to be moved.' 'Commit your way to him' in the darkest hour, and 'at even-tide it will be light.' Doubt not, but confide. What a boon, not only to mankind in general, but to Christians in particular, is the use of letters and the art of writing! for by these, at the uttermost ends of the earth, they can comfort and encourage each other by telling what the Lord has done for their souls."

The following extract will show that, though far removed from scenes with which he had been conversant, a deep anxiety for the interest of immortal souls, wherever he had been brought into contact with them, still lingered in his mind, and that the spiritual welfare of one obscure individual still retained its place in his bosom as an object of concern. In a letter to his sister-in-law, in Elgin, he inquires, "Have you ever visited the old man in the house at the back of the wood since I left? Try now and then to steal half

an hour to visit such characters. I have spent some of the most profitable, as well as the most happy hours of my life in these exercises. You always get good from it, either by being made humble or grateful, or both."

The Christian church at home was about this time called to sustain a severe loss in the removal, from the labours of this mortal life to the repose of heaven, of the late Rev. Greville Ewing, a man revered above many for the depth of his piety and the extent of his learning, and universally beloved for those many ornamental features of true Christianity by which his life was marked. It had been, as we have already intimated, Mr. M'Kean's privilege as a student to enjoy his instructions, and ever after he was wont to regard his instructor with the most ardent and sincere affection. When the intelligence reached Tahiti that his revered tutor was no more, he felt bereaved indeed, and sought relief for his sorrowing spirit in addressing a letter to Miss Cathcart, who, in the course of divine providence, had been honoured with the charge of watching over Mr. Ewing's declining days.

"*Tahiti, Matavai, 17th February,* 1843.

"My dear Madam,—I cannot forego the special opportunity of the 'Camden's' return to

Britain, without writing to some of my esteemed friends in my fatherland, and yourself among the few whom I shall at present find time to address. I send this by Mr. Heath, whom I wish to introduce to your kind notice while he may remain in Glasgow. He is a devoted missionary at the Samoas, a group of islands about 1,200 miles to the westward of this. Since the lamented Williams' death, he (Mr. H.) has, in a considerable degree, supplied his place, in sailing in the 'Camden,' visiting the different missions to the westward, and settling in new ground native teachers. He has had a great trial in the loss of his dear partner, some years ago. He is a devoted man of God, and I know this to be enough to introduce him to *your* notice.

"Alas! my dear madam, how shall I touch a note that is so full of woe to 'flesh and blood' as the death of your lamented friend, and my revered friend and tutor! I never did, nor ever can, revere mortal man as I did Greville Ewing, and as I shall continue to revere his memory. The emotions produced in my breast, when I heard of that distressing circumstance in this far-distant land of the heathen, were such as come not under that class of feelings which are describable. I was not taken by surprise; for, from his years, and especially his labours, he had run his course,

had fought the fight, and was ripe for his reward. My feelings were not those of regret that 'he was not,'—no, that could not be entertained, for I knew that 'God had taken him;' but they were nearly akin to those of cheerless solitariness, when all was taken away that was worthy reverence and love. You, my dear madam, were highly honoured and privileged in being the friend and companion of such a man of God for so many years. Whatever honour may attach itself to you from your family connexions in this world, one thing is certain—that your *enduring* honour is associated with your friendship with him who is 'gone before.' Your charge, I doubt not, for many years was one of deep anxiety; but it was a precious charge to suffer under. May God bless you, and make you a blessing through life, as he blessed and made blessings your friends who have departed; and may he prepare you a seat very near to them in the upper sanctuary.

"I hear that Dr. Wardlaw and Dr. Russell have published sermons on the occasion. Would it be asking too much to send them? Everything that contains the *name* would be esteemed by me, were it only a magazine or newspaper. By sending anything of the kind to the Mission House, London, addressed to me, 'Tahiti, South Seas,' it would

in course come to hand. Next to a letter from him who is gone, were he still with us, would I esteem a letter from yourself, giving me some account of his last moments. I have a letter, written with his own hand, a few months before I left my charge in Orkney to go forth to the heathen, which I have read and read again and again. It is a father's and tutor's advice to a son and pupil in the Lord. I shall keep it as an heirloom, and tell my son (I have a child), if he lives, the worth of him who wrote it. I long to hear how the cause of God is going on in Nile-street. We are now far removed. Ten years ago I was pursuing my studies at Glasgow, the frequent and honoured guest at the dinner-table in Carlton-place. What changes! What a changing world! I am now preaching the gospel to a strange people in a strange language. It is twelve months and two days since I and my dear partner and child (born at sea on our voyage out) landed on Tahiti. I have been attempting to preach the gospel of the grace of God to the natives for three months past. I have found it a galling thing for so old a scholar to set to and acquire a living language, and have my mouth shut so long. But, by divine assistance, I can now in some measure make known to the people the love of God in Jesus Christ. Tahiti, if ever it in truth was what once it was repre-

sented, is not so now. Alas! 'the gold has become dim.' Covetousness and universal apathy to vital godliness are the prevailing features of the people. The land is at present disputed. The French have claimed ostensibly its protection, but really its possession. The English admiral (Thomas), on the Spanish Main, S.A., has sent a ship to reconnoitre and report. There may be war; but 'the Lord reigneth.'

"Farewell, my dear Madam; peace be with you.

"Yours respectfully,

"T. S. M'KEAN."

"*Miss Cathcart, Carlton-place, Glasgow.*"

Among his own immediate circle of friends at home death was busy, and for these his heart was full of sympathy. He felt it his privilege to comfort the afflicted; and the distance at which he was now settled from those whom he loved rendered him none the less willing to offer the expressions of condolence and consolation to the bereaved and mourning in the land which he had left for his Master's sake. The friend in whose house he had chiefly found his home while in London was called, shortly after Mr. M'Kean's departure for Tahiti, to grieve over the removal from this world, by a very sudden stroke, of the beloved companion of

his days, between whom and Mrs. M'Kean there had long subsisted a sincere friendship. They had lived together in the same town of Elgin; they were attached to each other by the bonds of Christian affection; they had each left their homes nearly at the same time, to enter upon the responsibilities and satisfactions of united life. The piety of the departed, too, was of a high order. She was a devoted Christian, valued and beloved by the church at New Court, of which she was a member. Upon the painful intelligence of her death reaching Tahiti, Mr. M'Kean hastened to administer solace to his bereaved friend.

"I do not know, my dear brother in Christ, how to wake up again a note which has been so full of woe as the narrative of the sudden departure from this scene of your lamented and beloved partner. * * * We both, but especially Mrs. M'Kean, feel very deeply the bereaving stroke which has removed so soon and so suddenly one who had won so deep an interest in our hearts. * * * How inscrutable are the ways of God. 'His ways are not as our ways.' We left the departed in good health, surrounded by friends, and with every comfort and attendance in case of sickness; while my dear partner launched forth to a journey of several thousand miles on the ungovernable ocean, and, through a variety of unknown

and untried climes, within a few months of child-birth. The one has been taken away surrounded by physicians and weeping friends, and with every comfort and accommodation; while the other has been spared and preserved, and delivered from the tempest and the billow, and in the hour of nature's sorrow. I have a living mother and child, while 'the desire of your eyes has been taken away with a stroke.' What a solemn conviction of gratitude and responsibility ought this contrast to bring home to my mind! We were much comforted to find that in the deep waters your mind was supported, and that you could say, 'It is the Lord.' 'Shall not the Judge of the whole earth do right?' How precious you have found the gospel in your time of need! 'A sovereign balm for every wound' is the gospel of the grace of God. We loved her who has gone before very tenderly. She possessed in her character as a woman, and as a Christian woman, in an eminent degree, those elements which call forth esteem and affection. How often used we, when we were cradled on the billows, to talk of our beloved friends in Essex-street. We have frequently read the last letter of the departed; it lies now before me. Its date is 7th of September, 1841. The last words in the letter are the following: 'N.B. My health now is very good.' Yes, when we were privileged to read these words, her

health was indeed very good; for by that time she had reached, through the grace of God, that land in which all tears are for ever wiped away—where 'there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.' Let us, my dear brother, who are left behind be up and doing while it is called to-day, and follow stedfastly those who, through faith and patience, are now inheriting the promises. I have left myself but little room to say much respecting the cause of God in this place. I am sorry that I have little to say that is encouraging. * * * Covetousness, and an almost universal apathy to vital godliness prevail among the people. Instead of rejoicing over what does not exist, British churches should weep and pray over the prostrate cause of God in Tahiti. * * * * This land is now ostensibly under the protection of the French, but really in their power. Priests are here waiting in expectation of something. A rupture between the home-governments would make our stability here very doubtful. 'The Lord reigneth;' that is our bulwark. Present our kindest Christian affection to Mr. and Mrs. Miller. * * * * May the peace of God rest upon you.

"Ever, my dear Brother,

"Yours in the gospel,

"T. S. M'KEAN."

"P. S. Mrs. M'Kean unites with me in kindest Christian love. Kind love to Mr. James Russell, if near to you."

Although the charge which was now confided to him was one which made large demands on his mind and energies, still Kirkwall, the scene of his former labours, was not forgotten. His correspondence with personal friends at that place has already been introduced; but he did not confine himself to this manifestation of his affection—he addressed letters to the members of the church in their collective capacity, exhorting them to stedfastness and diligence in the divine life. His anxiety for the spiritual interests of the young will be discerned in the following communication.

"*To the Young Members of the Congregational Church of Kirkwall.*

"*Tahiti, Matavai, 5th May,* 1843.

"MY DEARLY-BELOVED YOUNG FRIENDS,—Though far removed from you, I have not forgotten you. Day by day I remember you, and commit you and the church of which you are members, to the mercy and loving-kindness of Him who alone 'is able to keep you from falling.' With a pleasure which nothing earthly besides can impart do I remember my labours among you in the Bible

Class; and I can assure you that these seasons were as profitable as pleasurable to my own soul. While instructing you, the young disciples in the Lord, in the things that concerned your highest and most enduring interests, the heart of your teacher and pastor burned within him while he opened to you the Scriptures. Yes, and with what delight have my eyes watched, when, as the word proceeded from my mouth, it entered not only the understanding but the heart, and became as the hammer of the Spirit, breaking the rock, and subduing it to God!

"I cannot for a moment, my beloved young friends entertain the supposition that you have forgotten those seasons. Grievously bitter indeed to my heart would be the thought that a single one of your number had forgotten these early impressions, and had turned again to the world. When, however, I consider my own heart, and know its real character, its proneness to depart from the living God, its treachery and deceitfulness, I cannot but at times have tremblings of spirit about you; for if I have run or laboured in vain among you, what profit have I of that labour—what cause of rejoicing to look forward to? and, alas! what are the prospects of those who draw back unto perdition?

"But my fondest hopes cling to far brighter prospects; they are hopes full of immortality to

you and myself, when we shall see each other face to face before the Lamb.

"You will now grant the indulgence which you were always forward to do, while I address to you a few words of exhortation.

"First. Be assiduous and regular in your attention to private devotion; namely, secret prayer, read- of and meditating upon the Holy Scriptures. Secret, believing, prevailing prayer is both the spring and stream of vital godliness. Remember, the first instance of forsaking the closet is the first step downward to spiritual death. Watch, therefore, and pray, that you enter not into this temptation.

"Secondly. Be assiduous and regular on all the means of public devotion,—on the public preaching of the gospel on the Sabbath and other days, as well as on all the fellowship-meetings of the church, and on other meetings for spiritual and mental improvement. Never allow any circumstance but personal or relative affliction to form the shadow of an argument why you should not be present. And remember that your hearty and profitable attention to private devotion insures your hearty and profitable attendance on the means of public devotion; and be aware, on the other hand, that the first desertion of the little sanctuary, the closet, is almost inseparably associated with the desertion of the public sanctuary, the house of God. Enter the house of God with

prayer, continue in it, and hear the word with the same spirit.

"Thirdly. Honour and love your pastor. It gave me unfeigned pleasure to know that the steps of my dear brother Webster have been directed to you. I know he is both able and willing to preach to you the gospel of the blessed God, with affection and faithfulness. He is worthy of your love, honour, and esteem, and most confiding attention. Honour him and his dear partner, and count them very dear for their work's sake.

"Fourthly. Pray for your pastor. I remember well, during the first eighteen months of my pastorate among you, when the cause of God was very low amongst us, how I used to desire to know whether I and my labours were principal objects in your secret prayers; and when subsequently assured that all of you had begun to labour with new faith and vigour, how differently did I work; and you all know how delightfully different were the results of those efforts. If, therefore, from past experience, you wish the cause of God to be vital and fruitful in your own hearts, in your families, in your church, in your neighbourhood, pray, I beseech you, pray for your pastor and his labours. Help him, encourage him, strengthen him, and make him a powerful preacher of the word among you, through your prayers for him.

"Fifthly. Seek to be employed in doing good; thus you will best imitate Him 'who went about doing good.' I hope you have not forgot the tract lending and distributing work. There are many ignorant and famishing sinners, young and old, about the lanes and bye-ways of your town. How could you meet such at the judgment-seat, if they could with justice complain to the great Judge, who knows all hearts, that the young Christians, their countrymen and townsmen, had allowed them to go down to the grave without an effort to instruct or warn them? Remember that the Lord will say to each, 'Give an account of thy stewardship.' Seek then to do good.

"Sixthly and lastly. Seek the society of the good and holy. Follow closely, in as far as they follow Christ, the most eminent in the divine life around you. Shun the company and intercourse of the thoughtless and trifling. Often have I presented this warning to you. Remember, you cannot keep company with them without disadvantage to your souls. If you are obliged at times to meet with them, secure yourselves from their contamination by embracing the suitable moment to speak humbly and affectionately to them about their souls.

"I have now done. I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace. May you be kept, by his mighty power, through faith, unto complete

salvation. Remember my last exhortation, 'Let us live to meet, if not on earth, in heaven.' My dear partner joins with me in all I have said. We request a continued interest in your prayers. We should be very happy to receive a letter from you all conjointly. Farewell, my beloved young friends in the gospel of the grace of God.

"Ever, with much affection,

"Your servant in the gospel,

"T. S. M'KEAN."

CHAPTER VII.

BRIEF PERIOD OF LABOUR—REMARKS ON THE STATE OF TAHITI —LETTERS FROM DIRECTORS OF THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY— SPECIAL EFFORTS—INCREASING TRIALS—DEATH.

FROM the circumstances under which Mr. M'Kean undertook the office of a Christian missionary, and from the spirit in which he entered upon it, expectations might well have been formed of extensive usefulness; and from the soundness of his constitution and the excellent health which he enjoyed, it might reasonably have been predicted that a lengthened period of service was before him. It pleased our heavenly Father, however, to order it otherwise. His thoughts are not as our thoughts, neither are his ways as our ways. The highest hopes of Christian friends were destined to be disappointed; and early summoned to the rest of heaven, he doubtless received there the divine approval, "Thou didst well, that it was in thine heart." Little more than two years was he permitted to labour ere he "entered the joy of his Lord," not called away by the stroke of disease,

nor yielding to the pressure of bodily infirmity, but in a manner as unexpected by himself and others as it was afflictive and overwhelming to all but himself. When he died, "his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated." There was mystery in the dispensation which issued in this loss to the missionary band in Tahiti. That he should have been constrained by a sense of duty, which he could not resist, to give himself to the work; that, in the carrying out of his purpose, he should have been permitted to leave a sphere of considerable usefulness at home—a church which loved him, and to which he was tenderly attached; that he should have travelled thousands of miles to reach his destination; that he should have acquired the native language so as to be able to employ it with comfort in the declaration of the gospel; that he should have formed his plans, and have begun to carry them out; that he should have speedily attained a reputation for all the higher attributes of missionary character; and then that, just at the moment when his life appeared more desirable, he should have been suddenly removed, was an arrangement of Divine providence before which his friends and companions could only bow with submission, assured that it was right and wise, though "too deep to scan with mortal eye."

Brief, however, as was the duration of his steward-

ship, there was much to render it one of peculiar difficulty and responsibility. Tahiti, in the estimation of every thoughtful Christian, has from the early times of modern missionary exertions possessed peculiar claims upon the regard of the churches at home from this one fact above many —that *there* God taught his people such a lesson of the power and efficacy of earnest, fervent, persevering prayer as attracted their minds most strongly, and served to encourage them most fully in the prosecution of efforts in other parts of the heathen world. There, after a night of toil long continued, and to all but the eye of faith most discouraging, when year after year had rolled by, leaving the missionary band to mourn over the absence of any fruit of their labour, it pleased the Lord of Hosts to "make bare his arm," and to revive the spirits of his waiting servants by a large measure of success. "The time to favour" its benighted people—"the set time was come." The people cast away their gods; and there, where just before not an eye was turned in anxiety to Jesus, nor a lip opened in his favour, his holy name was now publicly professed, and attachment to him avowed.

That, under this new aspect, the voice of the church at home should have been heard in accents of praise was only natural and consistent. The

gospel had triumphed; and those who had "sown in tears," now beheld the seed spring up. Their hearts were full of anticipations of a most abundant harvest, nor in this were they disappointed. Churches were speedily planted, the tokens of whose "first love" to the Saviour were of a character at once simple and striking. Tahiti soon came to be regarded, not only as the earliest proof, but as a peculiarly bright illustration, of missionary success. It became habitual with Christians to speak of it with unmingled joy and gladness. In their lips, its name carried a charm which was irresistible in producing excitement; and their tone, accommodated to the triumphs of which they told, was triumphant too.

It may have been that in this matter there was not always a due admixture of the spirit of prayer with that of praise—that the one was rather *exchanged for* the other than *combined with* it. For there is the same danger in regard to the success of the gospel among the heathen which exists in respect to instances of conversion, whether individually or collectively, at home—the danger of ceasing to consider those as the objects of continued prayer on behalf of whom, in consequence of gracious answers to past supplications, it has become not less a duty than a privilege to offer praise. How many a hopeful youth admitted into our churches has

suffered from the discontinuance of the prayers of those who, having received him into their fellowship, have congratulated themselves on the answer to their supplications, and have congratulated him too on the change in his spiritual condition, and then have acted as though they thought that his claim on any further interest in their special intercessions had expired! How many an enterprise, too, that was yielding fruit and promising more, has declined and withered for the same reason! as though the joyous emotions were gratifying, though partial results had quenched that spirit of prayer which was still as important as ever for the obtaining *an increase* of prosperity. How many of Satan's designs on the cause of truth are successful through this premature cessation of prayer! *Premature* such a course must of necessity *always* and under any circumstances be; for where on earth is the individual who has attained to that position, however elevated in piety or exalted in usefulness, in which he needs no longer the prayers of others? where is the church, however prosperous, however large its numbers, however endowed with gifts and graces, for which it would be safe to leave off praying? If, indeed, the conversion of the soul left it thenceforth free from the assaults of temptation—if the in-gathering of a church left it free from the deadening influence of the world, then

might it be right to praise exclusively, then might prayer be omitted and discontinued, but not otherwise.

We may apply these remarks to spiritual operations abroad. In regard to these, there exists the danger of which we have spoken—of substituting praise for prayer—of being so delighted with the just occasion for joy, when the hand of the Lord has been seen at work among the heathen on an extensive scale, as to fail in laying a proper stress upon the duty of intercession for their future spiritual course—of being so deeply interested in the success of the instrumentality by which this good has been accomplished as to forget to sustain that agency by continued pleadings with God on its behalf. To what extent this danger has actually been incurred by the church at home, in reference to missions generally, it is not the writer's duty to affirm, but rather to speak with humility as one conscious of personal failure. To what extent the subsequent condition of the churches in Tahiti is to be attributed to this omission, it would be presumptuous to assert; but that the permission of a painful change in the spiritual aspect of that sphere is calculated *to teach new lessons as to the importance of prayer* cannot be doubted, and lessons which should possess all the more weight from the consideration that

they come to us from the very same spot which, on a former occasion, God selected as the point of instruction. Fifty years ago from Tahiti his voice was heard in accents of encouragement, "Pray on, till the answer comes;" and now from the same scenes he is saying, "Continue instant in prayer; for though you have obtained a blessing, that very answer involves a further necessity for praying." "Men should always pray, and not faint." Where the welfare of souls and the interests of the church are concerned, it is never wise, never right, never safe thus to "faint."

It will be seen, from the official communications addressed to Mr. M'Kean (page 89), that the Directors were painfully alive to the fact that on the part of the Tahitian churches, a serious declension had taken place. On the existence of this state of things a remark or two may be made, not indeed with any view of diminishing the impression which so affecting a circumstance ought to produce on the minds of those who are interested in missions, but of mitigating the feelings of surprise and probable discouragement with which the fact might at first be received. We shall not be understood as looking with any indifference on defective religion, when we affirm, nevertheless, that a deteriorated state of piety, such as that of which the tidings had reached

the Board, does not necessarily imply the same amount of declension which similar manifestations would have implied in Christians at home. In judging of the degrees which have been lost, it is needful to keep in view the point which had actually and really been attained. And in regard to this attainment itself, in judging of its satisfactoriness or the reverse, it must be remembered that, in a people emerging from the gross darkness of heathenism and idolatry, an elevation which—among those more highly favoured, as at home, with the indirect results of Christianity—would be regarded as but small, might there claim to be reckoned as considerable and even striking. Looking at the case of Tahiti in the light of these recollections, the mind discovers at least some relief.

On the subsequent progress, too, of personal religion, we are not to forget that the former habits of converts often exert a mournfully retarding influence. Where is the observant Christian who has not himself found that, in the hour of temptation, there is no one means of spiritual distress to which the enemy of souls so much resorts as the suggestion of formerly-indulged trains of thought and habits of conduct? and that the things which were given up for the sake of Christ are those which come back most frequently in the shape

of sinful solicitation. Oh! it often requires a vigorous effort of faith to wield "the sword of the Spirit" against the recurrence of former transgressing habits. And where, because faith has not been maintained in strong and lively exercise, and through want of watchfulness, the Christian professor does not stand in the evil day,—how often are these the fatal occasions of backsliding and failure! Especially will this be the case where the external circumstances of the convert have not altered—where he is still surrounded by the same associations, and called to move in the same scenes as heretofore. Thoughts such as these, if applied—as they ought to be—to the case of the Tahitians, will still farther remove the embarrassment with which the fact of their declension might otherwise be viewed. After all that has been done for them, it must be confessed that in some respects they are still sadly behind in civilization; that there is still a preference for their former habits of living; and that many of these, instead of throwing a barrier in the way of the indulgence of evil passions, have a tendency the very reverse. To this it must be added, that the example of those, who coming from Christian countries were naturally identified with the Christian religion, has been too frequently such as, instead of encouraging the Tahitian to a high standard, to make him well satisfied with his own habits,

nay, even to encourage him where he had relinquished them, to fall back upon them with all their demoralizing tendency. It is not saying too much, to affirm that in some instances the direct influence of foreign intercourse has been so powerful for evil that, far from being amazed at the fact of spiritual declension, we may rather discover ground for thankfulness that this defection has not descended to a still lower ebb.

And, further, a distinction must be made between the laying aside of idolatry and a sound spiritual conversion to Christianity. In many instances, undoubtedly, these two were combined; but to a large extent the original movement toward the gospel was a step to which the people were influenced by the chiefs, and the chiefs by the King—whose motives, there is too much reason to fear, were in part of a political character. At a time when the profession of the gospel suddenly became all but universal, it would of course be difficult to distinguish, in every case, between the real convert and the mere professor. A leaven of nominal religion would easily be introduced into the churches, and such a leaven could no more exist and operate without injury to the mass in Tahiti than in England; and to this, in its measure, must the declension over which we mourn be attributed.

In consequence of these deeply affecting circum-

stances, it had been deemed only right and kind by the Directors, on Mr. M'Kean's proceeding to take charge of a sphere which had become to them the occasion of so much solicitude, to address to him the following special communication.

"*London, May* 31*st*, 1841.

"DEAR BROTHER,—Although we consider the 'Printed Letter of Instructions,' a copy of which will be put into your hands with the present letter, as embracing the principal counsels and directions to which we are desirous your attention should be frequently called while prosecuting the work to which you have been solemnly dedicated, we deem it proper, nevertheless, to address to you a few lines having a more special reference to yourself, and to the particular sphere of action to which you have been appointed.

"We rejoice that the grace of God, in concurrence with providential arrangements, has led you to forego the endearments of home and kindred, and even to dissolve an important pastoral engagement in your native land, in order that you may become the herald of mercy and salvation to the heathen. May all your present sacrifices and forthcoming trials and labours receive an abundant recompense—a recompense not of debt, but of grace—at the resurrection of the just!

"You are appointed, in conjunction with our

esteemed brother Mr. Jesson, and under circumstances of somewhat peculiar and painful interest, to reinforce the Society's mission at Tahiti, in the South Pacific. You have already been made fully acquainted with the actual state of the island, in a moral and religious point of view, so far as our own information extends. Suffice it, then, to remark that, on account of the lamentable want of spiritual religion amongst the native churches, the disorganized state of the schools, the irregularities and inefficiency of the native agents employed in them, and the general demoralization of the people, we are impressed with the solemn conviction that nothing short of the infusion of a new and vigorous principle of action will avail to counteract the existing evils, and to give solidity and permanence to that mission. But, independently of this lax state of morals and religion within the camp, it is in immediate danger from the insidious advances of the Roman Catholics without; and it is with the more especial object of meeting this danger that Mr. Jesson is sent forth, and for which we furnish him with separate instructions as to the course of proceeding it will be advisable for him to pursue.

"One serious obstacle* to our plans for renovating

* The points referred to in this and the succeeding paragraph have been in some measure anticipated at page 120. They are here inserted in order to preserve the completeness of the document.

the Tahitian Mission arises from the fact of some of its most important stations being retained by individuals who are incapacitated by age and infirmity from putting forth those efforts which the exigency of the case demands. The exemplary character and long and faithful services of these venerable men entitle them to our highest respect and most delicate consideration. Having, however, a paramount duty to discharge, in providing for the permanent interests of the mission, we have felt ourselves called upon to address letters, of which yourself and Mr. Jesson will be the bearers, to the honoured brethren Henry and Wilson, candidly explaining our views as to what the exigencies of the mission demand, and affectionately inviting them to retire to New South Wales or elsewhere —the Society making needful provision for their maintenance.

"It is our wish that the stations to be vacated by Messrs. Henry and Wilson should be occupied respectively by yourself and the Rev. William Howe, who is at present located at Eimeo, as may be agreed upon by yourself in conjunction with the brethren in Committee. Of Mr. Howe we entertain a high esteem; and we consider he will prove a valuable accession to the Tahitian Mission at the present juncture. We need scarcely remind you that, as upon your arrival you will find yourself placed in a delicate and invidious position in

regard to Messrs. Wilson and Henry, it will require the exercise on your part of the most tender consideration for their feelings. There must necessarily be some delay, while they are arranging their affairs and waiting for a suitable conveyance from the island. It will therefore be a subject of consideration, for yourself and the brethren in Committee, as to whether you should at once take up your residence at one of the stations to be vacated, in conjunction with the brother about to retire, or await his withdrawment. In the latter case, the brethren will advise you as to the best course to be pursued in order to turn the interval to the best account. The acquirement of a thorough idiomatic acquaintance with the language being of essential and primary importance, you can be at no loss for the profitable employment of this interval.

"Tahiti, being much resorted to by shipping, for the purpose of trade, &c., is fearfully exposed to the pernicious influence and example of foreigners. One of the great barriers to the success of the mission has arisen from this quarter; but, being an evil incidental to the circumstances of every community in its progress from barbarism to civilization, no direct remedy can be applicable to such a state of things. The extended diffusion and cordial recognition of the great truths of Christianity can alone avail for correcting the selfishness, and

regulating the principles of human conduct under the varied circumstances which the sophisticated relations of society introduce. It were devoutly to be wished, however, that this pernicious influence had been confined to foreigners visiting the islands for the express purpose of trading. Such, we lament to say, has not been the case. Some of the missionaries have from time to time been extensively engaged in mercantile transactions; and the practice, besides lowering the general tone and character of the mission, has, we fear, frequently brought them into invidious and degrading competition with their own people, whose interests happened to be embarked in the same line of traffic, which must necessarily tend to loosen every bond of union between the pastor and his flock. The practice originated in the alleged inadequacy of the salaries allowed by the Society. On the occasion of recently raising the salaries, we strongly remonstrated against the continuance of the practice of trading; but having some reason to fear that the practice is not altogether laid aside, we have felt ourselves called upon to intimate in a letter, of which you will be the bearer, addressed to the brethren, that any future instance of non-compliance with our wishes on this point will involve the forfeiture of the Society's confidence.

"Whilst, however, we trust you will be pre-

pared to enter a firm protest against anything you may discover in the conduct of the mission manifestly inconsistent with the simplicity of the gospel, or calculated to retard the progress of truth and righteousness, and also to use your best influence, under God, for giving a new and more vigorous impulse to every department of the mission, we, at the same time earnestly recommend you to cultivate the most cordial and affectionate relations with all your fellow-labourers, and cautiously to avoid every occasion of suspicion and misunderstanding, as, if indulged, they cannot but prove fruitful sources of disquietude to your own mind, and of positive injury to the sacred cause with which you are identified.

"We shall be happy to maintain with you a regular correspondence; and we are desirous that you should communicate with us in the most frank and explicit manner respecting the state of the people, the progress of your work, your prospects of success, your plans, your disappointments.

"Commending you and your beloved partner, and your companions in voyage and in labour, to the guidance and protection of Him whom winds and waves obey; praying that he may convey you in safety to the remote land whither you are bound, preserve you in health, watch over all your interests, make you an eminently successful labourer

in his service, and finally bestow on you a crown of glory that fadeth not away,

"We are, dear Brother,

"On behalf of the Directors of the London Missionary Society,

"Faithfully and affectionately yours,

"A. TIDMAN, } *Foreign*
"J. J. FREEMAN, } *Secretaries.*"

And here the wish cannot but be expressed that the explicitness which characterizes this document from the Board as to the actual state of Tahiti, had been uniformly imitated by all who have undertaken the office of publishing to the Church at home, whether by books or by the living voice, the state and prospects of the varied fields occupied by Christian missionaries. A serious responsibility attaches to such an engagement—a responsibility which does not always appear to have been regarded in a sufficiently accurate point of view. Undoubtedly, it is as pleasant to narrate as it is satisfactory to peruse or listen to a bright history of prosperity. Such a description is calculated to cheer the hearts of the supporters of missions, and to encourage them to sustain the cause which is successful. But should there be a dark side to the picture — should there be

sources of sorrow and disquietude—should there be fears as well as joys, and declension in any instance instead of advancement, it would be as much an invasion of Christian principle as it would be a want of Christian, and therefore of sound policy to withhold the painful, and to give exclusive utterance to facts which, though entirely true in themselves, yet, when put together by themselves and sent forth as a statement of the whole case, must constitute a very defective and really inaccurate description of that which they profess to represent. We say, it is unsound policy, and for this reason. In the success of missions, God has put honour on the prayer which he requires: no longer than there is earnest ardent prayer can prosperity be looked for: any course then that gives Christians such wrong views of any portion of the foreign field as would lead them to exult over, rather than to pray for it, must inflict upon that sphere the injury of depriving it of those supplications in answer to which blessings now withheld might come down. The keeping back of the facts of an interruption in prosperity—of a marked declension, however kindly intentioned, does this; it actually, by depriving it of many prayers, impoverishes the cause of missions of the surest means of success.

It may be replied, that considering the readiness of the enemies of the gospel to take advantage of anything unfavourable to its progress, it might not be wise to make exposures which would answer their purpose. That there are many who would abuse such statements is freely admitted; and to these occasion should not be unnecessarily or injudiciously given; but, even if we have reason to fear their reproaches, can we afford to purchase their silence at so great a cost as is involved in the loss of the prayers of thousands who only need to be informed of the cloud settling darkly on any spot in the Lord's vineyard, to plead with diligence and perseverance for its removal?

Should it be argued that some of the present supporters of missions would be discouraged from contributing by statements of a more mingled character than are sometimes made in books or on the platform—the reply is obvious, that it is saying very little for the amount of real missionary principle in any individual, or in any number of individuals, to intimate such a supposition; and that, were the case even so, it implies an unhealthy state of heart and mind, which the continuance of a system of partial representation would rather aggravate than heal. It cannot be doubted that every dark and painful incident which

transpires in the history of missions is a call on the church to redouble their prayers; and where is the enlightened Christian who would choose that the voice of God, calling on his people *to pray*, should be hushed because it was apprehended that it might possibly interfere with the calls which are made on them *to contribute?* It was therefore on right principles that it was expressly requested, in the instructions given by the Directors of the Missionary Society to Mr. M'Kean, "Write us candidly and fully regarding the state of the mission."

Forewarned, then, as to the condition of his future sphere, Mr. M'Kean left his native shores. But his hopes rose above his fears. The descriptions which he had heard and read from other sources of the former state of things on the island, and the glowing but too partial representations which he had perused of modern missionary enterprise generally, had induced a feeling of animated expectancy, tempered though it was by the information which he had received of an opposite character. And here we cannot fail to observe another mischief, and not the least, which is effected by those partial delineations, in which much that is bright is inserted with little or nothing of an opposite character. They painfully interfere with the comfort of those who leave their homes

to go and preach salvation to the heathen. To a missionary just arriving at the sphere of his future labours, much must depend upon his first impressions. At that period, disappointment is of all things to be deprecated; and yet, if he has been led by the representations of others to form too high an estimate of the condition of those among whom he is to labour, or to entertain too high a view of the general nature of the missionary work, that disappointment must necessarily supervene. His usefulness may not be eventually retarded by this,—he may, by the grace of God, rise above his grief, and pursue his work with energy; but why should his comfort be at that moment above all others removed? why expose him to the trial? why cause him the pang?

From some passages in the correspondence already given in the preceding chapter, it may easily be inferred that Mr. M'Kean's impressions, on becoming acquainted with the condition of the Tahitian churches, were those of disappointment and grief. Before, however, he had communicated to the Board the effect which a near view of the state of the Tahitian churches had produced on his mind, he received from them another letter, written with a view of sustaining and cheering him under the depression which might possibly be the result of a closer acquaintance with the realities of the case.

"*London, September* 18*th*, 1842.

"DEAR BROTHER,—We duly received your several communications from Teneriffe and Sydney, and also a note announcing your arrival with your family at Tahiti. Whilst, in this early stage of your correspondence, we of course have nothing on which to ground a letter, we cannot forego the pleasure of tendering our affectionate congratulations on the completion of your long voyage, and on the merciful circumstances under which you have been permitted to enter upon the scene of your future labours. When the mind reflects on the number and variety of events that might occur in the course of so protracted a voyage to peril health and life, it is indeed a subject for devout acknowledgment when, under the guardian care of a faithful God, every danger, seen and unseen, has been surmounted. May your life and the lives of those so dear to you have been preserved for eminent service in the Lord's vineyard.

"By a letter from Mr. Howe, of later date than your note of February, we were gratified to learn that you had already taken up your residence at Matavai, where you would doubtless find a suitable sphere for the exercise of your best energies.

"Going forth, as you did, fully prepared to encounter difficulty and trial, not only from the general character of missionary work, but also from

the influence of circumstances specially applicable to this field of labour, we have no apprehension that, whilst resting for strength and succour upon an Almighty arm, you will be shaken from the steadfastness of your purpose by surveying in their naked deformity the darker features of the mission. Still, there is so much in the influences by which you are surrounded calculated to weigh upon the spirits of one newly-arrived from the midst of the social delights and religious privileges of Britain, that, without the exercise of great caution, there will be an inevitable tendency in the mind to take stronger views of the extent of existing evils than facts would warrant or than might be adopted upon more mature experience; and to the extent to which such feelings are indulged, a measure of despondency may be induced, defective plans pursued, or right plans conducted in a wrong spirit. As we are merely putting a hypothetical case, we are persuaded, dear brother, you will receive these remarks as they are intended, in the way of affectionate suggestion, to put you on your guard against those peculiar influences, from which few men, whatever be the tone of their piety or the vigour of their minds, can claim entire exemption.

"Your next communication will, we hope, furnish us with some account of your entrance upon the duties of the mission, and of your peculiar trials,

encouragements, and prospects in connection with the work.

"In the meantime, affectionately commending you and your beloved partner, and all your interests, to the guardian care and effectual blessing of the Great Head of the Church, I have the pleasure to subscribe myself, in the bonds of the gospel,

"Dear Brother,

"On behalf of the Directors of the London Missionary Society,

"Very faithfully yours,

"For J. J. Freeman and Self, Foreign Secretaries,

"ARTHUR TIDMAN."

His subsequent correspondence with the Board only afforded an affecting confirmation of all their own views as represented to him. He faithfully unfolded to them all that came under his notice:—that the effects of commercial intercourse with foreigners had spread in various baneful forms among the people:—that there was a very general prevalency of an inordinate love of money, and that there was little scruple as to the mode of obtaining it:—that there was the absence of that simplicity about the religious character of the people generally which might have been expected; and that though their acquaintance with the letter of Scripture was considerable, there was a lamentable

want of spiritual discernment and practical reception. In reference to these points and to others to which, though most painful to his spirit to make the subject of communication, he nevertheless felt it his duty to advert—the Directors thus counselled him:—

"We have now to deal with things as they are; and while taking a cautious survey of the history of the past, it will be, not for the purpose of animadverting upon the course of procedure adopted by men who, in their circumstances, could scarcely have acted otherwise, but in order that we may task our best energies to retrieve past mistakes, and to introduce such measures as appear in our judgment best calculated to secure and perpetuate the interests of real spiritual religion in the field which witnessed the Society's earliest operations. With these objects in view, we have, as the exigency arose, sent forth new labourers to the work—discountenanced and prohibited the practice of trading amongst missionaries, by making such an advance in their salaries as to leave no apology for the continuance of the practice—encouraged the training of a native ministry, to carry forward the work of evangelization—and suggested various other means for establishing the mission on a basis of permanent prosperity. In addition, however, to an improved instrumentality, we look

and long, and earnestly pray for the descent of that gracious influence from on high, without which Paul may plant and Apollos may water in vain. We rejoice to see that the brethren, as a body, are fully alive to the importance of cultivating more and more a spirit of childlike, simple dependence upon the Author and Giver of all spiritual life—of disencumbering their minds of secular cares and perplexities—and of giving themselves with greater unreservedness, body, soul, and spirit, to the work of the mission.

* * * * *

"A. TIDMAN, } *Foreign*
"J. J. FREEMAN, } *Secretaries.*"

We have already seen how vigorously he applied himself to the task of acquiring the language. On this point the testimony of his predecessor, and subsequently his fellow-labourer in the field, Mr. Howe, is important. "The first indication," says Mr. H., "which one newly-arrived at a missionary station gives that he is under the full influence of his profession is the manner in which he sets about the study of the language, which is to form the medium of communication with the people. If, on landing, he immediately commences to acquire words, and to use them as he acquires them, both the people and the missionaries see in this the pro-

mise of speedy usefulness; and our brother manifested this proof to the joy of all on his arrival. He frequently did not depend upon an interpreter; but first having ascertained, from the nearest person who could give it, the name of any article he wished for, he would then ask the native for it in his own language, and by this habit he succeeded in a very short time in making himself generally understood."

The measures which he adopted, on finding himself able to undertake the regular duties of his station, were such as to prove the firmness with which he was prepared to encounter difficulty, and the inflexible integrity with which he was determined to act for the interests of true religion. On examining the state of the church, the oversight of which he had received, he deemed it prudent to dissolve it; at the same time he invited all who wished to unite themselves afresh in church-fellowship to intimate their desire to him, that he might become acquainted with the nature and amount of their personal religion, and have the opportunity of furthering their spiritual interests by his instructions and care. "The result of this step," says Mr. Howe, "was, that out of a large number who at first applied, twenty-seven were considered eligible by him, after a considerable time had been spent in preparing

them for re-union. The confidence which he had in these individuals, and the delight which he took in their company, often formed a topic of deeply interesting conversation between himself and his fellow-labourers, and proved how much he had at heart the spiritual welfare of the people of his charge. It may be asked, Was it then his opinion that the church was composed of unrenewed men on his arrival? To which I would reply, that whatever were his impressions concerning them on his arrival among them, his *convictions* before his death were that many of them were renewed persons, as the fact had developed itself fully in the case of the twenty-seven referred to. These he believed had not been converted by his own instrumentality, but had only been so trained as to fit them for understanding the duties and enjoying the privileges of church-fellowship. Had his life been spared to carry out his plans, I have no doubt whatever but that these would, under God, have been the means of a great revival of spiritual religion in the district, and that, with very few exceptions, he would have had the privilege and delight of receiving into renewed fellowship those who had previously composed the church. I will not venture a remark on the correctness or otherwise of the course pursued by our brother in this case: it was that which commended itself to his judg-

ment as the best, under all circumstances, to be pursued; and he was no novice, no time-server, no mere man-pleaser. He looked higher than man both for his authority and reward. That reward he now enjoys. He kept his Lord's injunction, 'Be thou faithful unto death;' and the promise of his Lord has been fulfilled, 'I will give thee a crown of life.'"

In a letter to the Directors, Mr. M'Kean refers to the facts above mentioned. "I have for the last nine months, as I have intimated before, been preaching the gospel to this people. I am now enabled to speak to them without much hesitation; and they seem to understand, and give an increasing measure of attention to what I say in my public ministrations. I have only acted, however, the part of an evangelist among them." "I have had a considerable conflict with myself in this matter, lest, on the one hand, I should be withholding from some of them that which was their rightful privilege, and lest, on the other, I should desecrate the ordinances, and in some measure perpetuate the delusion of the people."

In the meantime he left no means untried of communicating that sound instruction in the nature and claims of personal religion which would conduce, under the blessing of God, to a walk worthy of the gospel of Christ. "I am beginning," he writes to his sister-in-law, "to see some fruits

of my labours. I preach now *ex tempore* [in the native language], and at times with liberty and pleasure. Study and perseverance will conquer most obstacles. I have had a great deal of intercourse with the people, principally of a strictly religious character. I have no fewer than five classes and meetings in the week of a biblical and catechetical nature. Every day I have them with me at my house, or in the chapel, Mondays and Thursdays excepted."

On the Friday preceding the first Sabbath in April 1844, the new church at Haapape or Matavai was formed. A meeting was held, in which, after prayer and praise, they gave each other the right hand of Christian fellowship, intending on the next Sabbath to commemorate the dying love of Christ. They adopted the following rules, as an epitome of the claims made upon them in the Scriptures as Christian professors, and solemnly bound themselves, in the strength of God, to observe them.

"We who have subscribed our names to this document do resolve, under the divine grace and assistance, to abide by and consistently observe, as in the sight of the omniscient Jehovah, the following rules, derived from the holy Scriptures, as a guide for our walk and conversation in the world around us, which lieth in wickedness.

"Firstly. That, in obedience to the law of God, and for our own mutual edification and spiritual progress, we will attend regularly the public and more private meetings of the church, allowing nothing but personal or relative affliction to excuse such attendance. Heb. x. 25, the law; Mal. iii. 16, 17, the example and the promise.

"Secondly. That, under divine grace, we will attend regularly, at least twice every day, to family prayer, reading of the Scriptures, and praise, as also to secret and personal devotion, that we as individuals, and our respective families, may grow in the grace and favour of God. Jer. x. 25; Gen. xviii. 18, 19; 1 Thess. v. 17.

"Thirdly. That, as professors of the gospel, we are bound to train up our children in the way of the Lord. We resolve, under divine assistance, to command our children to attend to the means of public instruction, both on Sabbath and other days; and we also undertake to have a special oversight over their conduct in the house of the Lord. Ephes. vi. 4, the law; Gen. xviii. 18, 19, and Prov. xxii. 6, the promise.

"Fourthly. That we resolve to behave ourselves with all becoming attention, propriety, and decorum in the house of God on his holy day; and that, both by precept and example, we induce others to do the same. Eccles. v. 1.

"Fifthly. That, in order that we may be *indeed* what we profess to be, a separated people, we resolve to withdraw ourselves from all worldly and sinful intercourse and friendship with the unbelieving around us; and that if we, from our family connections and other necessary circumstances, are obliged to hold intercourse with them at times, we will, in order to shield ourselves the better from this contamination, and also to do good to their souls, speak frequently, closely, faithfully, and meekly to them about their spiritual and eternal concerns. Deut. vi. 6, 7; Col. iii. 16; 2 Cor. vi. 17.

"Sixthly. That, in dependence upon divine grace, we will adhere closely to truth, in the fulfilment of every word given or promise made, at whatever sacrifice, as well to those who are without as to those who are within the church; and that we resolve to cleave to truth and integrity in all our dealings with the people. Ps. xxv. 21; Ps. xv.

"Seventhly. That we will shun on all occasions and at all times attendance upon Paraparaus,* of whatever character, except the law demands us as principals or witnesses, knowing that such meetings are the source of vast pollution to the land. Reason, Prov. x. 19; 1 Cor. xv. 33; example, Ps. i. 1-4.

"Eighthly. That the first well-proven breach of

* Assemblies for political purposes—for the settlement of questions as to land, &c. &c.

any of these rules shall subject the offender to a rebuke (private) by the pastor; the second, to a public rebuke; the third, to expulsion from the church."

The intention of the church to sit down together at the Lord's Table on the next Sabbath was not carried out. At the very moment at which the desire of his heart seemed given him, events transpired which interrupted his usefulness, and brought increased distress upon his spirit. It had become now no longer a matter of doubt that, under the name of protection, the French were prepared to adopt any measures, however harsh and oppressive, which should leave them masters of Tahiti; and amid the state of alarm and disquietude in which the minds of the natives were thrown by the outrages committed at this juncture, and the demands which were made upon the missionaries to resist the progress of injustice and tyranny, the expectations of that long looked-for Sabbath were disappointed.

It is not necessary that we should recapitulate a history as discreditable to the national character of France as it has been afflictive to Queen Pomare and disastrous to the social and spiritual improvement of her subjects; the narrative has been already in many forms given to the public. It will, however, be readily understood that, by the events to which we refer, the missionary brethren were

called to occupy a position of extreme difficulty and most serious responsibility. The part which they themselves should act with respect to the French usurpation, and in reference to the efforts made to introduce into the island the errors and superstition of the Roman Catholic Church, as well as the advice which they should give to those who looked up to them for guidance, were questions which occasioned them deep and long-continued solicitude. On these points, it may suffice to introduce a single specimen of the counsels which were from time to time addressed to them by the Board as to the line of conduct which they should pursue.

"We have every reason to hope and believe that the major part, if not the entire body, of our brethren of the Tahitian mission are cordially attached to the great Protestant principle of equal liberty in matters of religion; and considering the extreme difficulties of your position at the present time, we feel ourselves called upon to offer one or two suggestions for your guidance. *On the one hand*, it appears to us to be incumbent upon you, while offering no resistance to the usurpation of the French, to avoid any act which may be construed, either by the French or the Tahitians, into *an approval of the usurpation;* for such an act, without securing for you the good-will of the former, would

inevitably alienate the esteem and affection of the latter. Neither your characters as Christians, nor your office as ministers of the Gospel, require you to compromise an iota of your civil liberties as British subjects, or to influence the Tahitians to any such course of proceeding in their transactions with the invaders, as might be construed into a *voluntary* surrender of their national independence. *On the other hand*, we would most earnestly entreat you not to afford the slightest countenance to any means for the defence of the gospel amongst the people, but those which are sanctioned by the gospel itself. It is by the force of truth, and not by an arm of flesh, that Popish error and the corruptions of the natural mind are to be successfully encountered; and the attempt to enlist the obsolete expedients of former days, in aid of a cause which disdains such alliances, can only retard the progress and ultimate triumph of Christianity, whilst it will afford its bitterest adversaries an advantage which they will not be slow to improve. 'Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might;' and, while depending for all needful supplies of grace and wisdom upon his inexhaustible fulness, let no scriptural means be left unemployed for giving a right bias to the minds of your people under the heavy and accumulated trials that have overtaken them. May they recognise in the chas-

tisement, though 'for the present not joyous but grievous,' the tender and faithful discipline of a Father's hand; and may you who now 'go forth weeping, bearing precious seed,' at no distant day 'come again with rejoicing, bringing your sheaves with you.'

"A. TIDMAN,
"J. J. FREEMAN, } *Foreign Secretaries.*"

While the deepest sympathy has been excited on the behalf of those who have suffered grievous wrong, the churches at home have been called to recognise in the events the voice of their heavenly Father, reiterating his appeal for an increased spirit of dependence and prayer on account of missions generally, and especially with respect to this once-favoured sphere. He—who, in the dispensations of his love and wisdom towards his children, sees it right to put some bitter into the cup of prosperity, because unmingled satisfaction would prove injurious, and might, perhaps, produce partial forgetfulness of himself—saw fit, at the very period when the Mission Jubilee was just about to be realized, and the cup of joy was about being taken in his people's hand at their commemorative festival, to drop this bitter ingredient into it, and thus to guard his church against the spiritual dangers always incidental to the retrospect of successful achieve-

ment. There could be no mistaking the divine admonition to the friends of missions, implied in the permission of these painful events, in such a quarter, and at such a time. To the churches in Tahiti, too, and to their pastors, these trying occurrences were replete with important instruction, and were calculated to produce many and anxious searchings of heart. "It is not for us," wrote the Directors, "to determine the designs of divine providence, or to speculate upon the probable issue of a dispensation so dark and calamitous as that which has been permitted to come over Tahiti, her churches, and her people. But when God sees fit to check the progress of his own cause, and to visit with chastisement those who own his sovereignty and profess to receive and obey the gospel of his Son, we may feel assured that he has some purpose worthy of himself to accomplish.

"If the churches of Tahiti have, in too many instances, fallen into a cold, lethargic frame, satisfied with a name and a place among the people of God, with but faint indications of the homage of the heart,—if they have been covetous and self-seeking, instead of seeking the honour that cometh from above,—if our dear missionary brethren, in days now happily past, have in some cases suffered their minds to be drawn aside, by objects of a secular

character, from things of all-absorbing interest and importance,—if such influences have concurred to check the development of holy principle and active effort for the glory of God on the part of those who, for so many years, have sat in the light of the Gospel,—it may reasonably consist with the ordinary course of the divine procedure, that the trials which have fallen with such accumulated weight upon Tahiti have been permitted with a view to the ultimate good of her people—that out of the fires of tribulation they may 'come forth as gold seven times purified,' and 'fit for the Master's service.' But, while thus bowing in humble submission to the providential dispensations of One who is 'excellent in counsel and wonderful in working,' we cannot but feel the liveliest indignation at the treatment the injured Queen and people of Tahiti have received at the hands of their lawless oppressors. It would be beside our present object to pursue the course of events from the first hostile visit of the French, in 1838, to the fatal day of Mahaena. It may be sufficient to observe that we have perused the recent correspondence of the brethren with the French authorities with much satisfaction, and the conduct of yourself and colleagues, in cautiously abstaining, on the one hand, from any act which might be construed into a recognition of the French sovereignty, whilst, on the

other hand, no means were left untried to avert, by friendly mediation, the collision and bloodshed that have ensued, commends itself to our entire approval, while we deeply regret that your attempted mediation was in vain."

It is known with what steadfastness the natives generally maintained their allegiance to Queen Pomare, and refused to acknowledge the French Protectorate. To escape the consequences of such refusal, they betook themselves in large numbers to the mountains, and encamped in their fastnesses. Mr. M'Kean took a deep interest in all their movements. Together with the other missionaries, he had used untiring exertion to prevent the effusion of blood, and to preserve peace. In his own district he attended the meetings of the people, and endeavoured to prevail upon them as long as possible to remain in their houses, and to commit their cause "to Him who judgeth righteously." He promised faithfully to remain with them, if they made up their minds to take his counsel. His efforts were so far successful that for a time they did not join the encamped party; and when they did, they were the last who followed their companions. Many were the solicitations which they received, and as often they sent back a refusal. But at length the French began to seize upon certain parties who had not acknowledged their

authority, and among these two of the best men of the district. This act convinced the people that there was no safety for themselves in staying, and with many tears they parted with the missionary whom they had learned to esteem and love. It now became very manifest that a collision would soon take place between the oppressors and the oppressed, and that his district would in all probability be the field of action. Mr. M'Kean, therefore, deemed it right under these circumstances to remove his family to the Society Group, which, being politically as well as geographically distinct from the Georgian, seemed to promise a shelter from the tyrannical proceedings of the French.* Having packed up whatever articles they thought were necessary and proper, they left their homes with heavy hearts, for much was that evening pressing upon their minds. Mr. M'Kean spoke but little, except when it was necessary to give orders. Apart from the anxiety he felt in regard to the mission, he

* In the following year, 1845, an unsuccessful attempt was made to plant the protectorate-flag on these islands too; and intelligence has since arrived of another attack, of a most atrocious kind, on one of them, Huahine. "On the 17th of January, 1846, at two o'clock p.m., Captain Bonard landed his troops, and burnt the town of Faré, the station of Mr. Barff, and the principal settlement in the island, containing upwards of 140 good houses; all of which were sacrificed, with the exception only of the mission-house and chapel, and one or two other buildings. The trees and fences were cut down in every direction, and every kind of pro-

felt too as a husband and a father. It was no small trial to be thus forced to quit his home, with his wife and two infants, the youngest only ten weeks old, with the prospect of leaving them at a distance, while he returned, as he had determined to do, to be ready to answer any call of duty on his own station. His trust in God, however, never forsook him: he felt confident in divine protection; and when the faith of others seemed ready to fail, he endeavoured to cheer and comfort them.

They proceeded to Papeete, whence a passage had been promised them to Huahine. The boat in which they had left Haapape was so much out of repair that they were compelled to sit with their feet in water; and Mrs. M'Kean, who had scarcely recovered her last confinement, suffered so considerably, that on their arrival at Papeete it became doubtful whether it would be safe for her to proceed to the Leeward. Everything conspired to

perty was abandoned to indiscriminate destruction and plunder. On the following day, January 18th, 400 French soldiers were landed from the 'Phæton' steamer, at a harbour on the north-eastern side of the island, and marched to Maiva, an out-station of the mission, whither the poor natives had fled to escape impending slaughter. To save their wives and children from destruction, they faced the well-armed, disciplined, but degraded troops of France, and fought bravely. The French had twenty-one killed, and forty-five wounded; the natives lost only two men and one woman." See 'Missionary Chronicle,' for August 1846.

urge their speedy departure from the island,—the rumours of an intended rising, and the probability of a desperate conflict. They therefore resolved to venture, and went on board, accompanied by Mr. Jesson and Mr. Joseph, with their families, and Mr. Thompson. The vessel had hardly left the harbour when an attack was made by the French on the natives, and, as they passed along, they heard the firing which told of the dangers they had just escaped. On the third day after sailing from Papeete, they arrived at Huahine, where they were kindly received by the esteemed missionary, Mr. Barff. The arrangement was that Mrs. Jesson and her family should remain there, while Mrs. Joseph and her family should find their temporary home at Raiatea with Mr. Charter, and Mrs. M'Kean, with her babes, at Tahaa. They all rested on the Sabbath at Huahine. An opportunity speedily occurred of carrying out their arrangements. The captain having kindly offered to convey them to their several destinations, they left on Monday afternoon, and early the next morning Mr. and Mrs. Joseph were landed at Raiatea. Mr. and Mrs. M'Kean arrived at Tahaa on the same afternoon.

He had scarcely seen his wife settled under the friendly roof of Mr. Krausé, when he set

out for Huahine, that, being joined there by Mr. Jesson, they might proceed at once to Tahiti, and watch the course of events. There was one reason which especially hastened Mr. M'Kean's return to his own station on Tahiti. When the rest of the people at length retired to their strongholds in the mountains, the little flock who had been so recently united in church-fellowship even now refused to follow them. Mr. M'Kean felt that these had a claim upon him, and he had taken too deep an interest in their spiritual welfare to treat that claim lightly. Unwilling as, under the circumstances, his wife was to part with him, she still felt that it was his duty to return, and, seeing his heart so much set upon doing so, she was prepared to make the sacrifice. He would say, "You know I promised to return, and I consider myself bound to fulfil my promise." Mrs. M'Kean's mind was far from being fully alive to the danger her husband was incurring. By his coolness and confidence she was in some measure lulled to security, since he cautiously avoided saying anything that might arouse her fears. After having, on the day of his departure, prepared the few articles which he was to take with him, she called him to see if all was right; and when he had satisfied himself on this point, he said, as his usual custom was on leaving home, "Now, my dear, let us have a

few words of prayer before I go." They knelt together at the throne of grace, while he committed his family, individually and collectively, to the care and protection of God, praying that he would watch over them, and bring them together in peace again. Little did they think that their next meeting would be, not at the throne of grace, to return thanks for his safe return, but at the throne of glory; and then that last united prayer on earth will have a more abundant answer than was asked, for they shall meet where parting is unknown. A few minutes afterwards, he bade his family an affectionate adieu, and with great calmness and composure took his departure.

"On his return at his station from the Leeward, he spent his time," says Mr. Howe, "with the few people who had remained there until they had been reduced to fifteen. The pressure of waiting soon began to distress his active mind; the expenses of the mission were rapidly increasing too, from the scarcity of provisions and other causes. Under these circumstances, the question of the maintenance of the mission became important and paramount. The dispatches which arrived at that period from the British government sanctioned the protectorate at Tahiti. He saw in this circumstance, first, that the con-

stitution of the Tahitian government would b entirely altered, without any hope of return t independency; secondly, that whether the peopl were subdued or not, the constitution of the mis- sion would be so altered in all its departments that one-half of the number of missionaries who had been previously employed would suffice for conducting it; and, thirdly, he thought that when every available point in the mission had been supplied with those of our number whose circum- stances or views would not allow them to remove, the remainder ought to return to England, and to make an effort to save the Leeward Group, if pos- sible, from falling a prey to the same oppression which had brought such disastrous consequences on the dominions of Pomare, and to obtain from home, as speedily as possible, a new edition of the Tahitian Scriptures, as affording to the people the best proof that could be given them of the unabated sympathy of British Christians with them, whatever might be their future political position."

These views, which had been formed during his solitary residence at Haapape, he submitted to his friend Mr. Howe, going over to visit him at his own station. Other brethren joined in the conference; and at length it was agreed that a meeting of the remainder of the missionaries

should be called, at an early period, to consider these important matters. When this conclusion was arrived at, he exclaimed, "Now my mind is relieved of a heavy load." He engaged in prayer that evening at his friend's family altar, and was peculiarly ardent in pleading with God for the people and the missionaries; while he remembered most touchingly his dear wife and children, then far away in Tahaa.

For the narrative of the few remaining incidents of a life which was now so soon to close, and for the detail of the circumstances under which it terminated, we are indebted to a letter addressed by his much-loved friend Mr. Howe to Mrs. M'Kean, and which, having been written on the spot, and while all the transactions were yet fresh in his memory, has an advantage over every other form of detailing them. This communication is therefore given at length.

"*July* 11*th*, 1844.

"MY EVER DEAR SISTER IN THE GOSPEL,—I hope that by this time you have had an interview with our dear friend the Rev. C. Barff, who was commissioned by the Committee to communicate to you the sad tidings of the very great loss you have sustained in the melancholy event which took place at Haapape on Sunday, June 30th,

which deprived you of a companion in the wilderness so good, so affectionate, so wise, so well fitted to fill the relationship in which he stood, that I know of none with whom I can compare him. The same event, too, deprived me of a friend and counsellor, whose place cannot be supplied in the present trying and difficult circumstances in which I and the rest of my brethren are now placed in this mission. Our dear friend had fully made up his mind to go to England, and was very anxious that I should go also, that we might unite, with brother Jesson, in attempting to introduce an improved mode of conducting some parts of this mission; but, alas! for us, the Head of the church had decreed otherwise, and has taken him from the midst of us. 'It is the Lord's doing, and marvellous in our eyes.' 'It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.' 'Not my will, but thine be done.' 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.'

"I have purposely refrained from writing, that our highly-respected friend might have the opportunity of completing the painful task committed to his trust, feeling assured that he would do it far better than I could by letter; but that you may have an exact statement of the facts of the case in a more permanent form, as well also as

an account of the last days of my much-beloved friend, to which you can refer at a future time, I will now give you a minute detail of the circumstances.

"On Wednesday the 27th of June, Mr. M'Kean, Mr. Jesson, and Mr. Smee came here; the two former to consult with me on the present state of the mission, the propriety of lessening our number, as so many are at present unemployed, and to fix upon the parties most suitable to retire, preparatory to a meeting of the brethren appointed to be held on the Tuesday following. Your dear husband had made up his mind most fully that he ought to be one of those who should retire. I argued long for his remaining, and that some of the younger brethren ought to remove to some other field. His mind, however, was made up; and he pleaded a variety of reasons why I should accompany him. I at last consented to leave the matter until the meeting. The party were to remain here until Monday, and then we were all to go over together. On Friday evening, however, Mr. M'Kean, with his usual zeal to be employed, said, 'I see no reason why three of us should remain here all the Sabbath doing nothing. Suppose two of us go over to-morrow morning; I will go to Haapape, and brother Jesson can stay at Papeete and preach in English.' I raised no

objection to this proposition, but only said I should be glad of their company if they would remain. Mr. Smee had taken Mr. Jesson's boat to Mr. Simpson's, and would not return until Saturday afternoon. The only way, therefore, by which the new arrangement could be accomplished was to take my boat; and in conversation concerning it, dear M'Kean said, 'Perhaps you will go with us?' I replied, 'I am just thinking about it.' 'Do so,' said he; 'and go with me to Haapape, and you will then see the state of the place.' This plan was, therefore, agreed upon; and we set out on Saturday morning early, and arrived safely at Papeete.

"My dear departed brother was only a short time out of my sight while there, as we stayed in Mr. Pritchard's house together. We dined at Mr. Buchanan's, and soon after left for Haapape in my boat. On our way, we sang a hymn which he had seen at my house, which took his attention very much, from the expressive character of the music. The words are,—

'Friend after friend departs:
Who hath not lost a friend?
There is no union here of hearts,
That finds not here an end,' &c.

"Ah! little did I think that these lines were to be so soon fulfilled in my own case.

"We landed on the beach at Haapape about four o'clock in the afternoon, and were met by a chief from Tarutira, who received us with joy, and said, 'There is much people here; we shall have a good day to-morrow.' We went to Mr. Wilson's to tea, who expressed much pleasure at seeing us, as he hoped the Lord would be with his own word on the morrow for the benefit of the people. It was agreed upon that I should preach; and after tea we walked up to your house, and announced the service to all we met. Many of the people followed us, with several chiefs to welcome us, who said they would send messengers out to all the people, and announce our arrival, as the principal part of the army was in the neighbourhood. We conversed with the chiefs until a late hour on the state of things; and they declared that nothing but the restoration of Pomare would satisfy them.

"After family worship with the few who remained of the church-members, and my boat's crew, my dear friend and I walked upon the lawn until past midnight, talking over our future prospects.

"On Sabbath morning, at daybreak, two of my young men came to the bedroom window, and said, 'The French are here.' I went out, and Mr. M'Kean followed immediately, when we saw the French steamer drawing in towards Papaoa. My dear brother said, 'Ah! it is all over; our Sabbath

is again marred; we shall have just such another day as when the "Charte" stood off. *Surely my work is done at this place!*' Oh! how little did either of us think that *his work* would so soon begin in heaven! Taviri and others came upon the verandah to bid us 'good-bye,' and expressed their regret that the movements of the French would again destroy the enjoyment of the Sabbath. We gave them a word of exhortation; and then requested them on no account to fight at Haapape, but to go direct to Papenoo, and there await their enemy. To this they gave their full consent, and promised to do so. We then went to Mr. Wilson's to breakfast, and met with large parties of the people going away, to whom we gave a parting word; and again requested that they would on no account think of fighting there, to which they replied that they would not do so. Before we had arrived at Mr. Wilson's, we saw the French soldiers inland, approaching the foot of One Tree Hill. We went into the house, and sat down to breakfast, when the steamer commenced firing. We, therefore, at once returned to your house, in hope that, as your house stands in a more open place, it would be better seen from the steamer than Mr. Wilson's, and might thus prevent her firing in that direction. By the time we arrived on your verandah, the soldiers had reached the top of the hill, and the vessel

was firing briskly inland to cover the troops. On seeing this, we did what we could to induce the natives, some of whom were still lingering about, to retire, and we believed had fully succeeded. We put my crew in the back kitchen. We now considered what steps we should take for our own safety, and, fearing lest the steamer, or gun-boats, two of which were plying along the shore, might fire upon us if we ventured to go near the beach, we decided that we had better wait until the steamer had gone by. She now turned in our direction; and we agreed to continue walking on the verandah, that we might be seen; also to keep our eyes steadily fixed upon her, that should she fire we might instantly fall down. We lifted up our hearts to God for protection, and she glided peacefully along. When she had passed, my dear brother said, 'Oh! how good it is to trust in the Lord! My heart was full of peace, although we were in such imminent danger.' The soldiers had by this time descended the hill, and some of them were on the beach, and others on the broom-road, now and then firing briskly into the bush: this made us fear that some of the natives were still hanging about, which would much increase our danger. We became anxious to see an officer, lest the common soldiers might fire upon us as they drew near. At length we saw the Governor upon the beach,

with all his staff on horseback, and a party of Haapape chiefs and other natives who have become French policemen. These came to us first in a very friendly manner, and shortly after the Governor and his staff. The Governor said to Mr. M'Kean, 'Well, Mr. M'Kean, you promised to come and see me, but you have not done so; and I am therefore obliged to come and see you.' He, with his party, then alighted, and came into the house, at Mr. M'Kean's request, to take some refreshment. He gave us a pass to go to Papeete, and wrote a note to Madame Bruat, which he requested Mr. M'Kean to take with him. When this was done, and while he was in conversation with me about Eimeo, the cry was made, 'To arms!' The party all went off immediately; the alarm, however, proved a false one.

"We then considered whether we had better go at once, or wait until the soldiers had passed, which the Governor had said would be in about an hour and a half; and the latter was decided upon. In fact, so completely disarmed were we of all fear, that Mr. Wilson proposed to remain all night, and to follow Mrs. Wilson the next day to Papaoa, whither we were to take her in the boat. Instead, however, of an hour and a half, it was at least three hours before the drum beat to march. About half-past twelve or one o'clock the soldiers began

to move from the large house where they had taken refreshment, to pass your house into the orange-grove, and to go on to the beach. The horses which had been left in your fence had all been taken away, with one exception; and, shortly after, the doctor of the 'Uranie' came for him, to put the panniers upon him on which to carry the wounded. A French soldier had become so intoxicated as not to be able to walk, and he was therefore put upon the panniers. The horse was led nearly to your front gate, out of which the Governor and his staff had just gone, where he threw the man, and broke a part of the railing with kicking; the man was then dragged into your fence, to save his life. While this was going on, I was on the verandah, counting the troops as they passed; and Mrs. Wilson was sitting upon a chair, engaged in the same way. The Governor had turned the corner of the fence towards the orange-grove, when, hearing the noise, he turned back, and called for Mr. M'Kean, who ran off the verandah to hear what he had to say. He then called me, and asked if we would put the man in my boat, as he feared to leave him lest he should be speared. I consented, and was returning with brother M'Kean to the verandah, when the rearguard, who had nearly reached the chapel fence, on their way to pass your house, commenced firing into the guava bush on each side of

the road; and having finished the shot in their muskets, they ran inside the chapel fence, and knelt down to reload their pieces. Just as we got into the verandah, Mr. M'Kean said to me, 'What is it?' and while I was replying, 'I think it is only a feint,' the Governor called again, and Mr. M'Kean stepped forward to the end of the verandah, near your bedroom window, to reply; and by the time he had done speaking to him I was at his elbow, when he turned and said, 'It is more than a feint,' and, turning again towards the Governor, who was just opposite to where he stood, he said, 'See the Governor is returning.' I instantly replied, 'Let us run in then;' and at that instant the fatal ball struck him; he gave one convulsive gaze, staggered, and fell. I instantly fell with him, to find the wound:—it was in the back of the head, and bleeding profusely. The balls were whistling round us, and cracking upon the walls. I jumped up, and ran from door to door, until I obtained admittance at the sitting-room door; the others having been locked ready for our departure. I got the parlour door opened immediately; and I and one of my young men went out, and pulled him in. I laid down upon the floor by his side, stanching the blood with one hand, and wiping his face with the other, crying aloud, 'Alas, my brother, if you can but speak one word, speak it.' But it was too late; the

moment he fell, that moment consciousness ceased. It could not have been more than a minute from the time he fell before I had him inside the house. His features were placid; and he snored like a man in a sound sleep for a few minutes, and then fell asleep in Jesus. The agony of my feelings at this moment can only be exceeded by your own anguish at receiving these tidings. I went into the passage, where were Mr. and Mrs. Wilson and the young men, crouching down, every instant expecting that a shot might strike them. I sat behind a box, which one of them had placed for safety; and there I gave vent to my feelings, one of the students [in the Institution for Native Agents] holding me by the hand, and doing all he could to comfort me. I thought of you, and your dear little ones; and I then remembered also that God is 'the Father of the fatherless, and the Husband of the widow.'

"At this moment a great noise was made at the parlour door. I went to see what it was, and found that it was the doctor with a wounded man. He asked permission to bring him in; to which I immediately consented, and then drew his attention to my poor brother. He opened one of his eyes, and saw it fixed in death, and said, 'I saw him fall, and knew that the shot was fatal.' They continued bringing in the wounded and dying, some of whom suffered frightfully before they

expired; while, on the other hand, my dear brother's pain was but the work of an instant, and then ceased for ever.

"The battle continued to rage near the house for about two hours, almost without a moment's cessation; and for about one hour longer near Mr. Wilson's and inland, when the natives retired to Mahaena, and the soldiers returned near the house. The Governor then came in, and expressed his deep regret at the death of my friend, and said, 'Poor M'Kean! he was a good man.' The other officers also said, that they could not find words to express their feelings.

"I asked for a file of soldiers to carry my dear brother to the boat, which was immediately granted; and I left the fatal spot about half-past four, in company with Mr. and Mrs. Wilson, for Papaoa. On our arrival, Messrs. Joseph and Moore, with their wives and Miss Platt, were waiting to receive us. On landing, the question was instantly put, 'Where is brother M'Kean?' and before I was able to speak, my blood-stained clothes told the sad tale. When I could speak, I said, 'He is in heaven.' As soon as I could, I wrote to brother Jesson, telling him the painful history, and asked him to get a coffin made immediately, and for him and the brethren to come with it, with any others who might be disposed to attend the funeral,

unless it was deemed advisable to take him to Papeete. The friends there thought of the latter; but there was fighting on Monday morning at Faaa, so that no one could be obtained to dig the grave. They therefore came to Papaoa on Monday morning, about ten o'clock, in the ship's boat belonging to H. B. M. Ketch 'Basilisk.' There were Messrs. Jesson, Barff, senior, Thomson, Smee, Buchanan, Saunders, Collie, Gifford, and Mr. Lane of the 'Basilisk.' Mr. Barff conducted the services. The young men of the Institution dug the grave. The boat's crew of the 'Basilisk' carried him. The coffin was covered with the Union-Jack, and Mr. Jesson and I followed as chief-mourners. We laid our brother by the side of the Rev. H. Nott. How mysterious are the ways of the God of providence! He has taken away the best man among us. Had our opinion been asked whom we could spare the best, we should have pointed to the least useful, and that one perhaps the least prepared. But stay, let me say no more. He is wise, and we are ignorant. 'Be still, and know that I am God.' Oh! for grace under all circumstances to do this!

"There will, perhaps, appear to have been some duplicity on the part of the people, in promising us that they would not fight at Haapape, and afterwards in doing so. I have it in my power

to explain this, from rather a singular circumstance. Hurue, one of the students, was upon the verandah when my brother fell. Instead of running into the house at the open door at the front, he made to the back of the house, and found your cook-house and the cocoa-nut grove filled with natives ready to attack the French. He jumped in amongst them, and raised his hands, exclaiming, 'Do not fire; we are all here; but M'Kean is shot. They dropped their pieces, which were all levelled, and said, 'Alas! we thought you were gone.' They then left the cook-house, and the back of the house, and went into the bush behind the chapel. He, however, could not come back, but was obliged to go inland. There he met with the chiefs who had spoken to us in the morning, who said, that they got as far as Mahaena, when they heard the firing of the French, and supposed that the battle had commenced between the French and some straggling party of their own; and that when they returned through the bush, the fighting had actually commenced. It was thus a party of 150 from Papaoa, and a large party from Papeete, followed up the French in the morning. The French, as I have before said, fired promiscuously into the bush as they came along. This drew the two parties of natives close to them in the bush on either side. On

the sea side were those of Papaoa, and inland those of the proper army. And just as the rear-guard had arrived near the chapel, the natives closed in upon them; and the result, though unintentional, was the death of your late affectionate husband and my much-beloved friend. I have thus given to you as minute a detail of the circumstances as my memory will furnish; the character of which seems to say, 'The hand of the Lord was in it.' O that a double portion of the spirit of our dear brother may descend upon us who remain, that when called upon to give up our stewardship we may be found—as we know he was—'ready!'

"Mrs. Howe requests me to express to you her deepest sympathies. This, however, I hope we shall have more substantial ways of proving, when journeying together to our fatherland.

"I am,

"My ever dear Sister in the gospel,

"Yours most affectionately,

"WM. HOWE."

Thus terminated, on the 30th of June, 1844, the earthly career of one who had excited the fondest hopes of his brethren, who had won to himself their affections, and of whom, when they spoke of his end, they bore the simple but im-

pressive testimony, "We have lost our best man." But his work was done, and his spirit was ready for the summons. The maintenance of an habitual confidence of his personal interest in Christ was a leading object in his daily practice of religion. He "gave diligence to the full assurance of hope to the end." He would often, in composing himself to sleep at night, repeat audibly the words, "Into thine hand, O God, I commit my spirit;" and would sometimes remark, "How delightful it is thus to fall asleep, in confidence that, whether we wake in time or in eternity, we shall wake with God!"

The mournful tidings reached the bereaved companion of his days in the manner suggested by the missionary brethren, and referred to in Mr. Howe's letter; the Rev. C. Barff proceeded to Tahaa, for the purpose of communicating them to Mrs. M'Kean. Four days before she had received a hasty note from her husband from Papeete, announcing his having attended a meeting called there by his brother-missionaries respecting the mission property, the title-deeds of which had been demanded by the French Governor. He adds, "I have been three days and nights in the camp, for which I have got into bad graces with the French. Our stay here is very precarious. God only can open the way. Pray for us, dearest. I think it very long to see you and our dear children. The vessel

is just sailing, and I must close. Kiss my dearest children for me. Ever yours, *until death*, T. S. M'K." How short a period was actually to intervene from the receipt of that note "until death" neither of them anticipated! After many days of anxious suspense, Mrs. M'Kean, and the dear friend with whom she was staying in Tahaa, discovered by the glass that a vessel had anchored in the bay of the neighbouring island Raiatea, and that a boat had just left, rowing towards Tahaa. Her heart began to beat high with the expectation of again greeting her dear husband, after an absence of three months. She fancied, nay—she made herself sure—that it was he whom she saw sitting at the stern. The boat came to shore, but now she perceived that she had been mistaken. Mr. Barff and his son walked up the pathway to the house. Her heart sunk within her; she could hardly speak. The agitated manner of her friend excited all her fears. He beckoned her to follow him into a room apart, and then revealed the painful history; and had not a gracious God afforded strength in this hour of unutterable distress, nature must have sunk beneath the stroke.

Every effort within their power was put forth by the missionary brethren to soothe the sorrows of the widow. They felt their loss was great; and they judged, from their own sense of bereavement,

how deeply her heart was wounded. The resolutions which they passed in their united capacity, and the letters which they wrote of sympathy and condolence, afford an affecting and appropriate testimony to the worth of the departed.

"*Raiatea, July 13th,* 1844.

"DEAR MRS. M'KEAN,—It devolves upon me to make you acquainted with the sympathies of the brethren of this mission [the Leeward] toward you, under the most painful and distressing bereavement which you have experienced — a feeling strongly in unison with my own—as expressed in the following resolution passed at a public meeting, 'Resolved, That we sincerely deplore the sudden and unexpected death of our much-esteemed brother the Rev. T. S. M'Kean, more especially under the painful circumstances which occasioned it; that we express our condolence with dear Mrs. M'Kean under her painful bereavement; and that a copy of this resolution be handed to her.'

"Nothing, my dear madam, has preyed upon my spirit so much for a long time as this event,—not on his account, for he has exchanged worlds without the pains and anxieties which attend the natural decay of the frame; he has been removed without suffering from an earthly to the heavenly Sabbath, where he will rejoice in full fruition of a holy

rest,—but on account of his charge, and of the people in general, and on account of you. But God will provide; he will be 'a Husband to the widow, and a Father to the fatherless.' Here then is something for faith to lay hold of, and hope to depend upon in all the trials of life. Murmur not at this trying dispensation. Say, though hard to say, 'He doeth all things well.' Who knows but that he was taken away from the evils to come? Contemplate his present enjoyment in contrast with ours, and look on the dear pledges which are left you, and for their sakes mourn not as one without hope. 'Rise up, and eat bread,' and care for them, training them for God. Accept of our love and condolence, and

"Believe me, yours truly,

"GEORGE PLATT."

"*Committee-Room, Papeete, 10th July*, 1844.

"MY VERY DEAR SISTER,—With feelings of melancholy satisfaction, I forward to you the following resolutions, in reference to an event which has inflicted a deep wound in our hearts, but a *deeper* in yours.

"'Resolved, That we, the members of this Committee, deeply deplore the great loss we have sustained in the sudden and mysterious removal of our highly-esteemed and greatly-lamented brother,

the Rev. T. S. M'Kean, who was killed by a musket-shot, at the commencement of a contest between the Tahitians and the French troops, while standing on his own verandah, in company with the Rev. William Howe, on Sabbath-day, June 30th, 1844. By this painful dispensation of a wise and unerring Providence, we feel, as a Committee, that we have suffered an irreparable loss. Our loss, however, we regard as light compared with that to which our dearly-beloved but bereaved sister, Mrs. M'Kean, is thus subjected.

"'This Committee beg to assure our dear and afflicted sister, that while she has our deepest and most prayerful sympathies, our best offices are at her entire disposal.'

"Such, my dear sister, is the resolution of the brethren. Before this letter reaches you, your heart will have been pierced with sorrow; but most ardently have I prayed for you, and most confidently do I hope, that He in whom you have placed confidence in months and years that are past has thrown around you the shield of his mercy, has sustained you in the hour of trial, and imparted the consolations of his Spirit to your wounded heart. Of my dear brother, and your affectionate husband, I will say nothing at present. I have much to say when I shall see you, and when your mind is prepared to receive it.

"We have engaged a vessel to take us to Valparaiso, and thence to England; and be assured, my dear sister, that any service in my power, either to yourself or to your dear children, it will afford me the highest satisfaction to render.

"That the Lord God Almighty may sustain and bless you and your dear little ones, guide you and them through time, and ultimately unite your spirits with the now-glorified spirit of the dear departed, is the sincere prayer of,

"My dear Sister,

"In the bonds of Christian affection,

"Yours most faithfully,

"JOHN T. JESSON."

"*Paofai, Tahiti, August* 18*th*, 1844.

"MY DEAR SISTER,—Before you finally leave the islands, permit me to express the deep sympathy which we feel for you in the loss which you have sustained. We have lost a brother, dear to us all by the holy example which he always exhibited; the church has lost a zealous and devoted labourer; but you have sustained a loss beyond what words can express—a loss which the widowed heart alone can feel. Still mercy has been mingled in the cup. You have not to sorrow as those who have no hope; you have only to sorrow for the short period which separates you from your beloved, and to look for-

ward with happy anticipation to that day when you shall again be united in the presence of your God, in that world where sighs and farewells are sounds unknown. This painful stroke, while it tends to sever your affections from this world, will unite you more closely with those around the throne, among whom my dear brother is now privileged to stand. May we too 'be faithful unto death,' that so we may obtain 'the crown of life.' Often shall our prayers ascend for you, that you may be resigned to our Father's will, that you may enjoy that comfort which cometh from above, and that your dear little Frank and Mary may be trained up to walk in the steps of their honoured parent. * * * Farewell. May your voyage be a short and happy one; may you arrive in safety, and find all well.

"R. THOMSON."

It only remains to be mentioned, that as soon as arrangements could be made for the purpose, Mrs. M'Kean returned, with her fatherless babes, to England, accompanied by Mr. Howe, and the brethren Jesson, Joseph, and Moore. They arrived in safety in the month of February 1845. It would be vain to attempt to describe the distress and anguish amid which the widow found herself once more on British ground. The alteration in her circumstances was in itself overwhelming, and

its painfulness was of course much enhanced by the brevity of the period which had served to produce the change. At such a time of tribulation, Christian friends felt deeply the urgent claims which were made upon them for sympathy, nor were they slow in manifesting their love and tenderness. By personal attentions, and by kind communications directing the mourner to those unfailing sources of support which the Gospel supplies, they sought to minister comfort to her wounded spirit, and to prove to her that she still possessed a place in their affectionate thoughts and earnest intercessions. "You are not left alone," wrote one whose own hand is since cold in death, "for your heavenly Father is with you. Your Redeemer lives, and he has said, 'I will never leave you, never forsake you.' Your 'God will supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.' That promise which assures you that he will be the 'Husband of the widow and the Father of the fatherless,' we pray that you may feel richly, completely accomplished in your own experience. According to your faith in this respect, it will be unto you."

And here the narrative must end. The scenes which it has described are varied; but all of them such as invite to serious reflection, and will well repay it. It tells of a child who received its first

serious impressions at the family altar, and whose heart was first melted there by a father's prayers. It speaks of a youth exposed to the seductive influence of a wicked world, and sorely tempted to become its votary and slave, yet preserved from finally yielding by the remembrance of a departed parent's supplications. It presents a young man, thoroughly devoted to God, consecrating himself to his service, with no determined choice of his own as to the field of labour he would wish to occupy, but simply leaving his destination to the Master whom he served—his only desire this, "Here am I, send me." It exhibits a pastor labouring with a truly missionary spirit among the people of his charge, cultivating, amid his every-day occupations, those habits of mind and heart which qualify alike for the right discharge of the ministry at home and the successful prosecution of the same work in distant climes. It pourtrays a servant of Christ, surrounded by all those ties which hold together the hearts of an affectionate church and an earnest pastor, and having recently formed another union which might naturally have made him reluctant to entertain the thought of such a change as would render him a stranger in a strange land, yet quick to obey a call in which he recognized his Master's voice, and encouraged by the willingness of a like-minded companion, undertaking the charge of a

foreign station in the midst of difficulties more than usually great. It calls us to contemplate a church so far imbued with the love of Christ and a desire for the advancement of his kingdom among the heathen, as that, after the first recoil from anticipated separation, they felt it their honour and privilege to give up their pastor for the sake of Jesus and his gospel. It unfolds in some degree the anxieties and solicitudes experienced by missionaries in the prosecution of their labours; and by affording some idea of the many and incontrovertible claims which each member of this devoted band has upon the sympathies and prayers of the British churches, it rebukes languor and lethargy in this respect, and animates to the redoubled entreaty, "Be thou their arm every morning, their salvation also in the time of trouble." It tells that He who raises up instruments for carrying on his work is nevertheless not dependent on them; for it asks our tears over a man of God, cut off in the midst of his days, and at a time when his decision of character, his warmth of Christian love, and his habits of eminent spiritual-mindedness, had more than ever won for him the esteem and affectionate confidence of his brethren; so that when he was taken from them they looked round upon themselves as a mourning family, and felt that they had lost that one who could, according to human judgment, have least been spared.

That these are circumstances on which the mind may dwell with profit, every serious Christian will allow; nay more, that there exists an absolute necessity, in the very state of religion at the present moment, at home and abroad, in our households and in our churches, that the points which arise out of them should each be anxiously and prayerfully considered. To the thoughtfulness of those who avow regard for Jesus and his cause they are affectionately commended. To families professing godliness; to the young disciples of the Saviour; to pastors and to churches, would we, with much love, and in the spirit of earnest entreaty, say, Ponder these things—pray over them—and turn them to practical account.

THE END.

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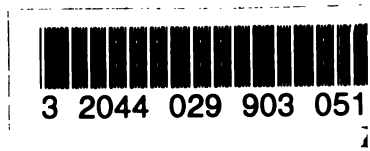
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